Gov't out to reclaim SMC from Danding

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2001 ★ 62 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 56 ₱15

Spare me, Chavit tells Ombudsman

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHEN Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson came out with his explosive charges against President Joseph Estrada late last year, he said he didn't mind spending time in jail with him.

Now that his drinking and gambling buddy has fallen from power, however, Singson has

SPARE/ A16

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Gloria-Erap battle shifts to elections

Proxy fight heats up wrangling within Edsa forces

By Juliet L. Javellana,
Martin P. Marfil
and Cathy C. Yamsuan

AFTER a bloodless showdown for Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo and ousted predecessor Joseph Estrada are sharpening the claws of their parties and bracing themselves for the battle for control of Congress.

"The coming elections will be important because this is (Ms Macapagal's) first political test as President, so I think she herself would campaign," presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said yesterday.

More than 3,600 local and congressional positions, including half of the 24 Senate seats and the entire 208-member House of Representatives, will be contested in the general elections on May 14.

Ms Macapagal needs a friendly Congress to pass legislation aimed at delivering the country from its economic doldrums.

And Estrada, deposed but still kicking, wants to regain lost political clout. Aides said a victory by his candidates would help vindicate the once immensely popular action film star.

The odds in the proxy fight at the polls, though, appear to strongly favor Ms Macapagal, as even Estrada's aides admit.

"We're taking an uphill battle," said Ronaldo Zamora, Estrada's former executive secretary and secretary general of his once powerful Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

Estrada must struggle to win back the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the Nationalist People's Coalition, which joined his party in the LAMP coalition when he was still in power. The LDP and the NPC have since distanced themselves from Estrada.

The wrangling, the bargaining

GLORIA-ERAP/ A6

VAL HANDUMON

BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE

President Macapagal and her officials meet with businessmen on Thursday, including (standing, from left) Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, Cesar Buenaventura, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas, Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, (seated) Ricardo Romulo and Jose Cuisia.

DOJ filing more cases of plunder vs Estrada

By Donna S. Cueto
and Martin P. Marfil

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice is planning to file with the Office of the Ombudsman three more cases of plunder against ousted President Joseph Estrada, according to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Perez also said the DOJ would try to recover the mansions, bank deposits and other assets of the former President.

Estrada is already facing seven criminal cases at the Office of the Ombudsman, including plunder and graft. These were filed by lawyers and anti-crime groups.

"Aside from the cases already filed with the Ombudsman, we are finding out if additional cases could be filed. Offhand, I could say three additional cases of plunder could be filed against former President Estrada," Perez said in a press briefing in Malacañang yesterday.

"We're now compiling the evidence and we are confident that the evidence to be presented to the Ombudsman shall be complete," he said.

Perez did not reveal details of the three new plunder cases that the DOJ was developing. But he said the pieces of evidence were "very strong" and could pin down Estrada.

Perez said he did not want to alert those involved in these cases because they might try to flee the country.

"I will not be at liberty to inform you until the charges are filed so that I could issue the hold-depar-

DOJ/ A16

Erap only wants legal immunity–Palace

'This is part of his strategy and defense' vs criminal suits

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada's defiant stance is a mere ploy to claim immunity from suit, according to the Macapagal administration.

"We believe that this is part of his strategy and defense" against criminal suits, Renato Corona, President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson and chief of staff, said yesterday in a radio interview.

Even Ronaldo Zamora, Estrada's former executive secretary, said the disgraced leader's speech on Wednesday at the Club Filipino "was not a threat" to retake power from Ms Macapagal.

"According to his lawyers, one of the consequences of that speech would be: If he's in fact still the legal, *de jure* president, then he still enjoys immunity from suit, which is a privilege attached to the position of the president," Zamora told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Zamora was responding to the question of whether the bottom line of that speech was for Estrada to eventually claim immunity.

Initially, Zamora said the matter was "for his (Estrada's) lawyers to decide."

The Associated Press quoted Zamora as saying that it would be difficult for Estrada to actually regain power.

"There is nothing that can be done. Whatever President Estrada says, the situation now will not change," AP quoted Zamora as telling radio station dzMM.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez told reporters: "I suspect that the reason he claims he's still presi-

ERAP/ A16

DENNIS SABANGAN

COMING AND GOING

Outgoing Tourism Secretary Gemma Cruz-Araneta exchanges confidences with her successor, Richard Gordon, during turnover rites at the DOT office on Thursday.

Mercado, Estrada kiss and make up

By Carlito Pablo

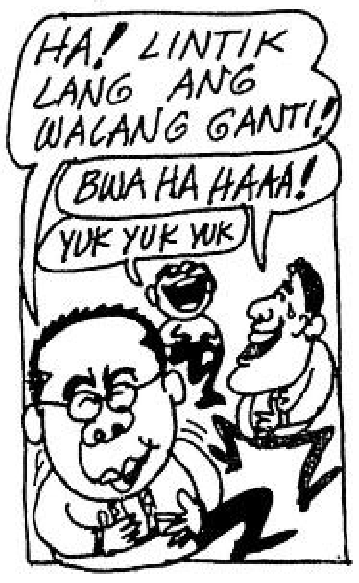
TIME heals, but it took only 10 days for deposed President Joseph Estrada and former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado to return to each other's arms.

Mercado yesterday said that for the first time since Jan. 19 he was able to speak with Estrada three or four days ago at the former President's home on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

"I told him to understand what transpired and he didn't question me much," Mercado said, referring to his withdrawal of support from Estrada that led to the collapse of the Estrada administration.

For his part, Estrada reiterated to Mercado

MERCADO/ A5



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BWA HA HAAA!
YUK YUK YUK

Sotto, Jaworski get even, grill phone officials

By Juliet L. Javellana

SENATORS who were the targets of a text-messaging "hate campaign" in the days leading up to Edsa II have found that getting even is better than getting mad.

In a joint hearing of the Senate committees on public services and trade and commerce, Senators Vicente Sotto III and Robert Jaworski openly accused cellular phone service providers Smart and Globe of

SOTTO/ A5

Ping pooh-poohs plum posts

By Leah Salterio

WITH the changing of the guard, don't count out PNP Director General Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, the police general perceived to be closest to deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Only hours after she took her oath as the country's 14th president on Jan. 20, President Macapagal-Arroyo offered the former chief of the Philippine National Police an ambassador's post to a country of his choice.

While wannabes jockeyed for plum positions in the new government, the 52-year-old Lacson was also offered to become a director of one of the sequestered corporations.

Lacson said during an interview with the INQUIRER Metro Section (the interview in full will be published next week) that he turned down both offers from the new President made through Executive Secretary Renato de Villa.

It was not the first time that the con-

PING/ A16

LACSON: At the crossroads. EDWIN BACASMAS

SIGE NA! DAPAT LANG!

Second FRONT PAGE

Gov't to reclaim SMC voting rights

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's government plans to reclaim voting rights over a 47-percent stake in giant San Miguel Corp. currently held by Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, an ally of deposed leader Joseph Estrada, officials said yesterday.

"To take back the voting rights is part of the legal options being studied in relation to San Miguel," said Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, according to a report by Agence France Presse.

Romulo said the government was preparing a legal statement that would clarify the status of the 47-percent stake and how it would go about regaining control of it.

Cojuangco is chair of San Miguel, having re-assumed the seat just days after Estrada became president in June 1998.

Romulo did not elaborate but said the government "will follow the law in whatever we do."

The shares were sequestered in 1986 after then president Ferdinand Marcos was deposed.

The government seized the 47-percent stake in 1986 after alleging it was illegally acquired through special favors granted by Marcos, who was also a close friend of Cojuangco.

Earlier Thursday, Ms Macapagal's chief of staff, Renato Corona, said the government was seeking to have a 27-percent bloc of the stake declared as having been acquired with public funds. The other 20 percent is being contested in a separate legal action.

The 27-percent stake is estimated to be worth P50 billion and was acquired by foundations controlled by Marcos through a special levy on the coconut industry.

The ownership of the shares has been contested by Cojuangco and the government, tying them up in litigation. The wrangling has also hampered the ability of San Miguel, one of the country's largest firms, to raise funds.

When Estrada was elected in 1998, Cojuangco regained voting rights over the sequestered shares. The Estrada government later announced a plan to sell off the 27-percent bloc even before the ownership issue was settled.

Corona confirmed the government would call off the Estrada plan, saying, "We will fix that coconut levy. The important thing is to declare, once and for all, that the coconut levy funds are public funds and are owned by the nation and the people."

Corona said the Macapagal government will make it a priority to settle the coconut levy issue as well as other charges that Marcos and his allies stole billions from government coffers before the dictator was ousted in the People Power revolt of 1986.

Estrada, a former Marcos ally, was toppled on Jan. 20 in a similar revolt and was replaced by Macapagal.

The Philippine Commission on Good Government, created by former president Corazon Aquino to run after cronies of Marcos, sequestered the 47 percent in San Miguel shares on charges that they were ill-gotten, having been bought with P9.6 billion in coconut levy funds collected from coconut farmers.

The Macapagal government, in its first week in power, rescinded Executive Order 312 that declared the coco levy funds to be private and EO 313 that created a trust fund to hold the proceeds from the sale of 27 percent of the San Miguel stake.

Romulo said the new government would uphold a directive of former president Fidel Ramos that declared that of the 47-percent bloc, 27 percent was bought directly with levy funds.

He said the government hopes to resolve the issues of the San Miguel shares as well as the coco levy as soon as possible.

He added that cases against other cronies of Estrada, such as Lucio Tan, would be pursued, even as he stressed that the new administration "is not after personalities."

"We will follow the law," he said in response to questions about the long-running P25-billion tax case against the Filipino-Chinese businessman who was among the biggest campaign contributors to the presidential kitty of Estrada. *AFP, with a report from Clarissa S. Batino*

Desierto opposes Erap exile

By Michael Lim Ubac

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto objected yesterday to proposals to allow deposed President Joseph Estrada to be exiled, saying it would hamper efforts by the government to prosecute him.

"I'm expressing my vigorous objection to have former President Estrada exiled as the same would delay the criminal proceedings now pending against him and his co-respondents," Desierto said in an interview.

Desierto said the physical presence of the deposed President was vital to the successful prosecution of the plunder, malversation, graft, bribery and falsification charges lodged against him in six complaints.

"For the pending preliminary investigations to be promptly completed, and for the trial of the case, if warranted, to smoothly proceed, the former President and his co-respondents must remain within the Philippine jurisdiction," he said.

Desierto explained that it would be illegal to try Estrada in absentia "if he has not been properly arraigned." He said he had already ordered the Special Preliminary Investigation Panel led by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio to finish the preliminary investigation earlier than the 60-day prescription period.

Also, Desierto complained that the ongoing Ombudsman investigation against Estrada was being hampered by the deliberate refusal of the Senate impeachment court and the former members of the House prosecution panel to furnish it with all the documentary evidence presented before the impeachment court.

Maceda won't pay taxes for cars

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

AN INDIGNANT Ernesto Maceda, former ambassador to Washington, insisted he will not pay the taxes running to millions of pesos for a luxury car he wanted to bring in from the United States.

"In case they ask me to pay the taxes, I will just ship it back rather than pay P6 million," Maceda told a TV interviewer Thursday night upon his return from the US.

Returning diplomats have the privilege of bringing in one vehicle duty free after serving at least two years at their foreign post, among other conditions.

But Maceda did not want to bring in just one car—a 2000 Mercedes Benz S-500 worth around P3.9 million—he wanted to import a 2000 Toyota SUV valued at some P2.6 million as well.

Maceda admitted the Toyota was for his sister.

"*Kung makakalusot, di* okay. *Kung hindi eh di bayaran yung* tax," he said. ("If we could get away with it, well okay. If not, we'll pay the tax.")

Maceda also sought a tax exemption for two 2001 BMW BX5s worth about P3 million each for his "foreign affairs advisers" Rolleo Ignacio and Patricia Porras.

Former president Joseph Estrada, whom Maceda served as a spokesperson in his final days in office, signed an order dated Jan. 5, 2001 allowing the exemption from taxes of the four vehicles Maceda intended to bring in.

This despite the fact that Maceda served only 18 months as ambassador to the US and the cost of each of the four vehicles exceeded the limits set for vehicles not subjected to duties.

Maceda said "everyone" at the Department of Foreign Affairs "takes advantage" of this diplomatic privilege to bring in a car which they could sell at a profit later.

"As far as I know chiefs of missions don't have (price) caps (for the cars they can import duty free)," he said.

Navy drives away Sino fishing boats

THE PHILIPPINE Navy boarded four Chinese fishing vessels near a disputed South China Sea shoal and ordered the fishermen to leave the area, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

However, no arrests were made in the latest confrontation between the two neighbors over the Scarborough Shoal, which is claimed by both countries.

A Chinese fisherman was shot dead in another confrontation by the two rivals in the area last year.

Foreign department sources said the four vessels left Thursday after a two-week standoff that began on Jan. 15, but they would not say when the boarding took place.

Acting Foreign Secretary Lauro Baja told reporters the Filipino sailors confiscated their catch of several sea turtles, a protected species that the Chinese had illegally gathered. The vessels were then ordered off.

Navy ships and reconnaissance aircraft shadowed the Chinese boats for two weeks after the crew refused earlier demands to leave the shoal.

After the initial warning was rebuffed, DFA sources said the Chinese Embassy "called the attention" of Manila on the alleged harassment of its citizens.

Embassy officials told the DFA that the vessels had anchored at the shoal to seek shelter from bad weather, and asked Manila to withdraw the military vessels sent to track them. *AFP*

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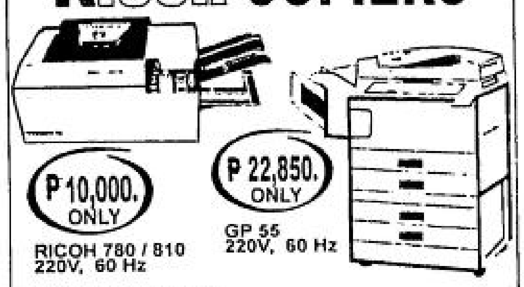

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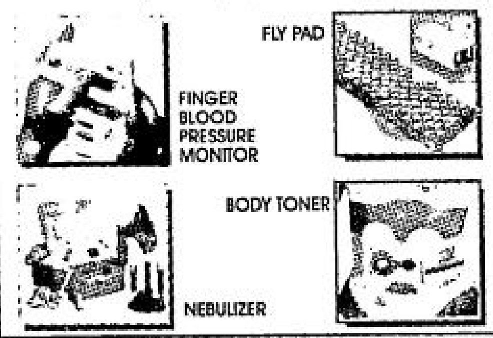

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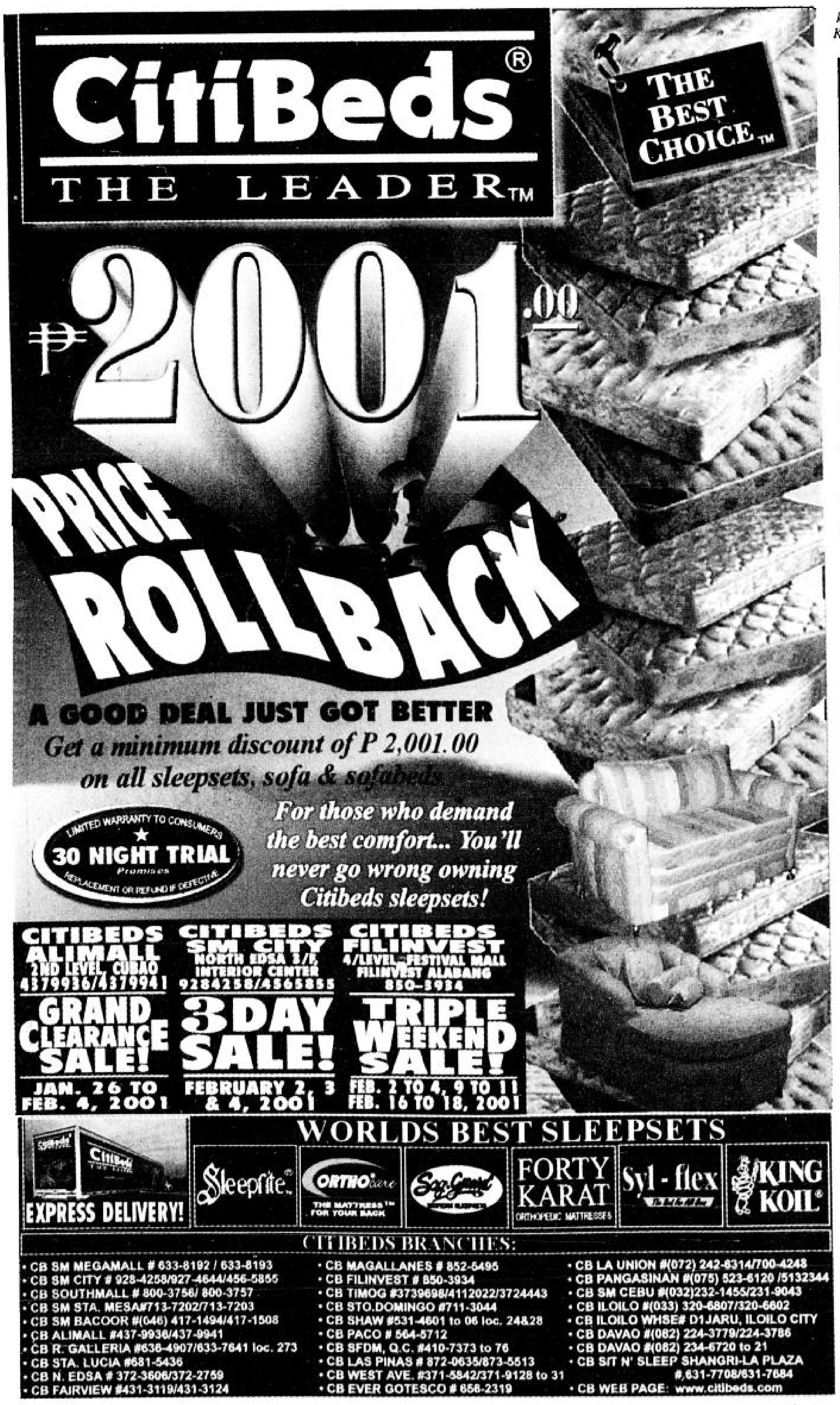

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Oops! De Villa admits mistake in GSIS posting

By Armand N. Nocum

DESPITE several missteps, the new Macapagal administration is not out to remove tenured officials from office.

This was the assurance made by Executive Secretary Renato de Villa as he admitted the government erred when it named a new chair for the Government Service Insurance System.

Current GSIS chair Hermogenes Concepcion Jr., in a letter dated Feb. 1, 2001 to President Macapagal-Arroyo, said her appointment of Victor Dumon was irregular because the post was not "vacant."

Concepcion told Ms Macapagal that as an incumbent, he enjoys a "fixed term of six years which will end on June 30, 2004."

De Villa said it was possible that Concepcion's tenure was "overlooked."

"We'll face up to the problem," he said. "We'll check it out."

De Villa added that the matter should not be viewed as an indication of serious flaws in the selection process of the new administration, or a move to remove certain people from office.

"We are not in a purge situation," he said.

Dumon was believed to have been recommended to head the GSIS by Lito Osmeña of the Promdi party.

Concepcion was appointed to the post when former president Joseph Estrada assumed office in 1998. Prior to that, Concepcion was legal counsel of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission.

At the same time, senior GSIS officials dispelled reports their newly appointed president and general manager, Winston F. Garcia, was involved in an "aborted reinsurance deal" during the Ramos administration. *(See related story on page A14.)*

The officials said they had no knowledge of any such deal involving Garcia. They said they did not know him prior to his appointment as GSIS chief executive.

The officials said they were issuing the statement after accusations surfaced implicating Garcia in irregularities in the pension fund.

Garcia, a lawyer, succeeds Federico Pascual.

Palace unfazed by coup threats

By Donna S. Cueto

MALACAÑANG is not fazed by coup plotters but is more concerned about the terrorist threat they pose to innocent civilians.

Administration spokesperson and Presidential chief of staff Renato Corona said those forces out to destabilize the Macapagal government were small in number and are no threat to the new dispensation.

"There are reports (that) they have the arms to back them up but this has not been verified. Even if it is, how many people do they have—20, 30, even 50? I really don't know," Corona said Wednesday in a late press briefing.

Asked who the "destabilizers" were, Corona said they were connected with the previous administration.

"I think you and I know who these people are—obviously political opponents who were deposed recently," he added.

"The problem is not that these people might topple the government, it's the fact that innocent persons could get hurt should they resort to terrorist activities," Corona said.

On Dec. 30, 2000, more than 20 persons were killed when five bombs went off almost simultaneously in different parts of Metro Manila.

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Filibuster to ambush ad ban bill

A MINORITY congressman yesterday vowed to block all efforts of the new majority in the House of Representatives to ratify a bill lifting the political advertisement ban.

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen alleged that House leaders, particularly Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. and Deputy Speaker Sergio Apostol, are interested in having the bill approved as soon as possible since they will benefit from a provision it contains.

Congress has three remaining session days next week when they can approve the bill which is up for ratification by solons.

While Dilangalen filibusters on the floor during these days, the rest of the minority congressmen would boycott the sessions, according to Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano Jr.

Dilangalen noted that the bill, which was modified during a bicameral session, adopted a provision introduced by the Senate allowing incumbent solons to remain in their posts even if they run for other positions until June 30, 2001.

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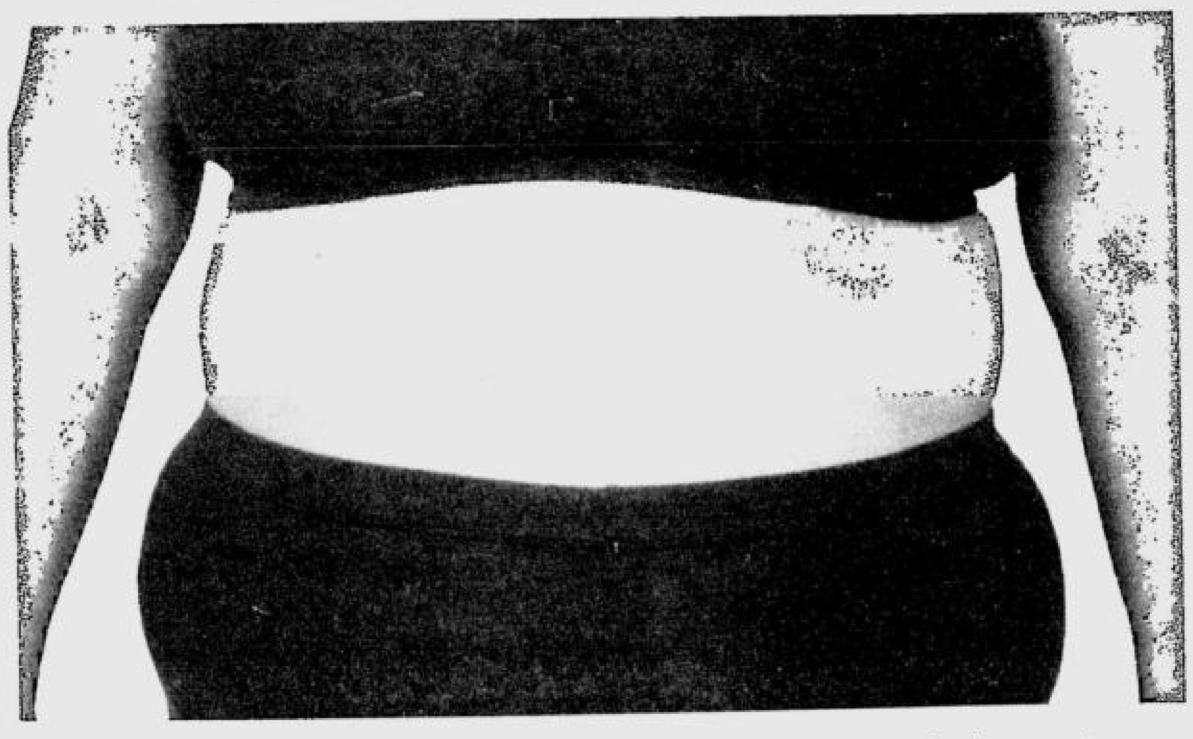

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Roxas holds off clamor for head of 'abrasive' asec

By Gil Cabacungan

TRADE Secretary Manuel A. Roxas returned to his old post yesterday and encountered a new problem—employees of the Department of Trade and Industry are demanding the dismissal or resignation of an assistant secretary.

But Roxas managed to convince the employees to hold off their protest action against Trade Assistant Secretary Melissa Toby Monsod and to sit down with her to iron things out.

Monsod is the daughter of former National Economic and Development Authority chief Solita Monsod and former Comelec chair Christian Monsod.

Nearly 150 employees signed a manifesto urging Roxas to convince Monsod to resign from her post in order to preserve the unity of the DTI family. The employees warned Roxas that "they would take the necessary steps to force her to resign."

The DTI employees described Monsod as a "fire-breathing lady who grabbed the opportunity to get her position." The employees said they "tolerated her abrasive conduct and uncouth, overbearing stance" believing that she would "mellow" but she had continued to display her obnoxious air "projecting an image of a know-it-all guru."

The DTI employees banded together against Monsod after a DTI driver formally complained that he was a victim of Monsod's "verbal abuse." The driver claimed that she left him in a deserted spot along the North Luzon Expressway as she took over the vehicle.

Monsod told the INQUIRER later that she hoped to patch things up in a dialogue with the DTI employees today. She did not comment on the charges against her.

2 acquitted in HK over Marcos fortune

HONG KONG—Two remaining defendants were acquitted on charges they plotted to benefit from the fortune of the late Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, anti-corruption officials said Thursday.

Local broker Tang Hoi-lam and merchant Gu Hao were cleared in district court of charges of conspiracy to defraud bank employees at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp., said Francis Li, a spokesperson at the Independent Commission Against Corruption, known as ICAC, which prosecuted the case.

Businesswoman Chuk Oi-fong and mainland Chinese businessman Chi Yiu-sui were discharged two weeks ago after the court ruled that the ICAC had misled Chuk into believing she would not be prosecuted—and threw out statements she had made to investigators.

The four were alleged to have tried to help former first lady Imelda Marcos withdraw money from bank accounts of her late husband, according to the South China Morning Post. *AP*

IUCZ0201 A
IUCZ0309 A
BSAC0058 A
IDTZ0067 A
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ICTZ0070 A	Katrina coffee table imported from Malaysia	4,580	3,664	20%
ISTZ0065 A	Katrina end table imported from Malaysia	3,380	2,700	20%
BSAC0058 A	Seville sofa set with (1) 3 seater, (1) 2 seater	22,300	17,840	20%
IDTZ0067 A	Kentucky dining set for 6 (1) table, (6) chairs, golden oak	32,600	25,998	20%
IBR0076 A	Lea 571 in the country bedroom set (1) 571-930 HB (1) 571-420 NT	21,915	13,149	40%
IUCZ0317 A	Kentucky open shelf buffet and hutch	26,950	21,560	20%

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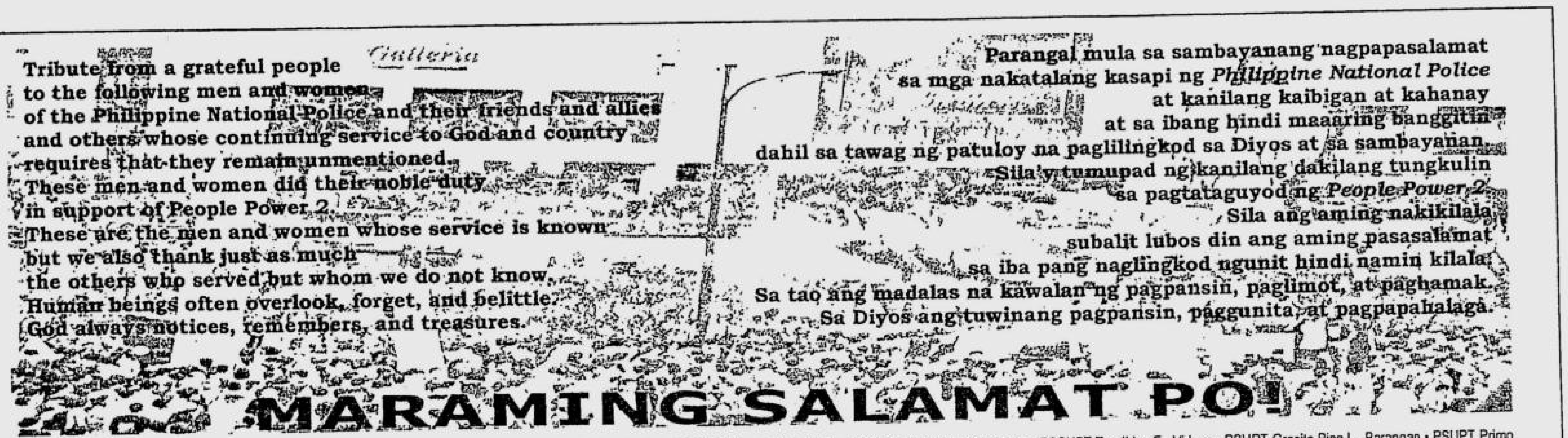

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in support of People Power 2.
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God always notices, remembers, and treasures.

Parangal mula sa sambayanang nagpapasalamat
sa mga nakatalang kasapi ng *Philippine National Police*
at kanilang kaibigan at kahanay
at sa ibang hindi maaaring banggitin
dahil sa tawag ng patuloy na paglilingkod sa Diyos at sa sambayanan.
Sila'y tumupad ng kanilang dakilang tungkulin
sa pagtataguyod ng *People Power 2*.
Sila ang aming nakikilala
subalit lubos din ang aming pasasalamat
sa iba pang naglingkod ngunit hindi namin kilala.
Sa tao ang madalas na kawalan ng pagpansin, paglimot, at paghamak.
Sa Diyos ang tuwinang pagpansin, paggunita, at pagpapahalaga.

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alay ng
Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan

Mercado, Estrada kiss and make up

BACK where he belongs, ex-Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado by Estrada's side in this file photo taken in September 1998. EDWIN BACASMAS

(From page A1)

that he was innocent of the accusations that he received payoffs from "jueteng" operators and that he kept ill-gotten wealth in different banks under different aliases.

"This is consistent with his legal defense," Mercado said.

During their meeting, Mercado offered to resign as president of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP), the party they have built since the two struck up a political alliance in 1996.

Asked to describe their rekindled association, Mercado said: "Time heals all these things."

Sources, however, claim that Mercado is not telling the complete story.

The former defense secretary has been present every night at Estrada's residence since the ousted President returned to Polk Street on Jan. 20 after he vacated Malacañang, according to the sources.

They said Mercado was at Estrada's residence when Joseph Victor Ejercito, son of the former President by Guia Gomez, called a press conference on Tuesday.

The press conference came on the eve of the PMP's convention at which Estrada declared that he was still the country's President.

"Mercado was present in party meetings before the convention," a source said.

Mercado resigned from the Cabinet of newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo on Jan. 25 following the appointment of former Armed Forces chief Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser.

Mercado said he could not work with Abadia whom he accused of misusing the pension funds of the military's Retirement, Separation and Benefits System.

A growing protest against Abadia's appointment prompted Ms Macapagal to drop the general on Tuesday.

Mercado was not present during the PMP convention on Wednesday at the Club Filipino in San Juan, but he was listed as one of the party's nominees in its senatorial slate.

The ties between Mercado and Estrada began when they were elected to the Senate in 1987.

Nine years later, Mercado was the first senator to join PMP. He served as Estrada's campaign manager in the 1998 presidential election.

Mercado was Estrada's original co-anchor in the defunct "Jeep ni Erap" radio program.

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Sotto . . .

(From page A1)

leaking the cell phone numbers of senators to their subscribers.

Officials of the phone companies were summoned to a hearing after Jaworski, Sotto and Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad filed a resolution seeking to inquire into "alleged anomal(ies) in the conduct of business," which they said ranged from evading tax payment on prepaid cards to poor service.

The senators threatened the telephone firms with charges of tax evasion and more stringent regulations on the sale of pre-paid and SIM cards.

The senators seemed particularly incensed over the fact that they have been the butt of jokes and nasty messages circulating among the four million cell phone subscribers in the country.

Sotto and Jaworski blamed the telephone companies for the flood of "malicious and defamatory" messages that found their way to their units.

Some of the messages listed the cell phone numbers of Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta and other senators, which were forwarded to other subscribers.

But Rodolfo Salalima, senior vice president for corporate affairs of Globe Telecoms, and Rogelio Quevedo, head of the legal, external and carrier relations division of Smart Communications Inc., denied they leaked subscriber numbers.

The two also said the phone companies could not censor text messages "without a court order" since the act would constitute invasion of privacy of communications.

Smart and Globe executives also admitted that they did not have the technological means to prevent the spread of "hate text" messages.

Mental anguish

Sotto, Jaworski and John Osmeña said they were forced to change their cell phone numbers at the height of the four-day uprising that swept Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency.

Tatad discarded his unit altogether because of rude messages. "My wife was terribly hurt and she could not sleep. Imagine the mental anguish that she experienced because of the charges leveled against her," Sotto complained.

"It did not happen to me alone, it happened to so many people, that is why I think these telephone companies should think about their social responsibility," he added.

Jaworski noted that the offending messages came from prepaid telephones, whose owners could not be traced because their SIM cards were sold over the counter and were not registered.

Sotto said that prepaid phones were also being used by criminals.

Sotto and Jaworski were among the 11 senators whose vote to suppress key evidence in Joseph Estrada's impeachment trial led to the collapse of the trial and drove the opposition back into the streets.

Make them think twice

Sotto said the telephone companies should be asked to register the buyers of prepaid SIM and phone cards for accountability.

Irresponsible texters would think twice if they knew that they could be traced, he said.

But he complained that the phone companies "just don't want to do anything about it."

The senators zeroed in on the alleged non-payment of taxes on the sale of prepaid cards. Smart reportedly sells up to 200,000 prepaid cards a month while Globe sells 350,000 a month.

They also complained about drop calls, poor reception and connection problems that leave consumers at the losing end of the multibillion-peso industry.

Poor service

Sen. Juan Flavier, one of the 10 senators deemed heroes for voting to open the sealed evidence, sympathized with his colleagues' complaints about poor service.

Flavier and Jaworski want the firms to raise from five seconds to 10 seconds the cut-off time for drop calls so that subscribers do not have to pay for calls that do not go through.

Flavier took note of the phone firms' admission that 90 to 95 percent of their subscribers are prepaid card users. The companies sell an estimated 350,000 to 400,000 prepaid cards monthly, and Sotto said that the government was losing hundreds of millions in potential tax revenue.

Ramoncito Ona of the Bureau of Internal Revenue assured Sotto that the agency has been investigating the possibility of a tax scam since 1999.

"Hopefully before the end of the month we can come out with the report," Ona said.

New regulation?

He also said that the BIR may issue a new regulation governing the prepaid card industry within two weeks.

Quevedo, however, said his firm would oppose measures that would curb the freedom of expression through text messages.

"That is one thing we will also want to oppose. We do not want the number of text messages to diminish because text messaging is one of (the factors) responsible for the success of Edsa People Power II," he said.

"There were even more cell phones on Edsa than candles . . . It's the cell phones that called people power into action," he added.

Flavier suggested another reason that the phone companies are less than keen on regulating the use of prepaid cards. "The truth is that it would affect their business since they earn billions of pesos in profit in this industry," he said.

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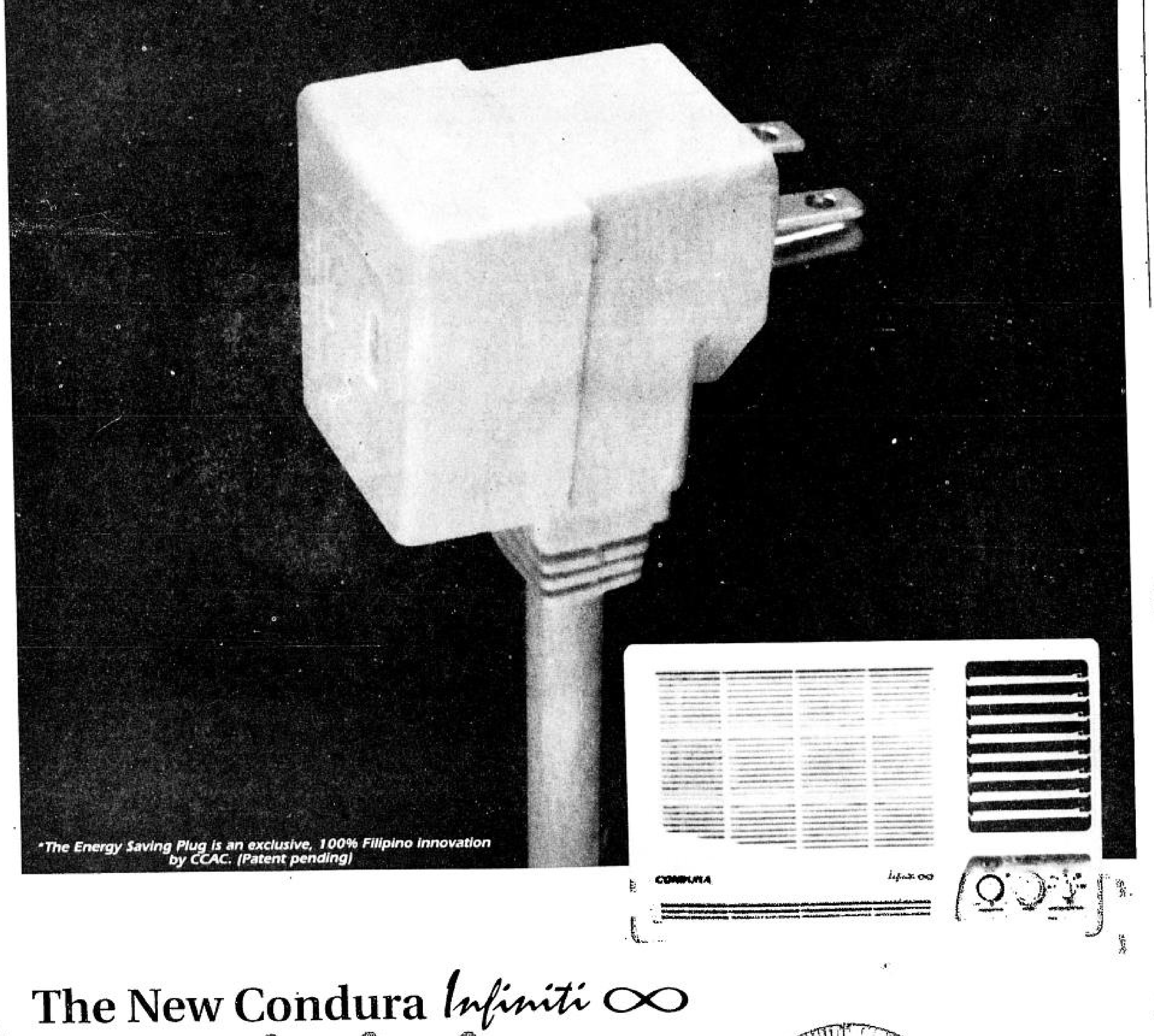

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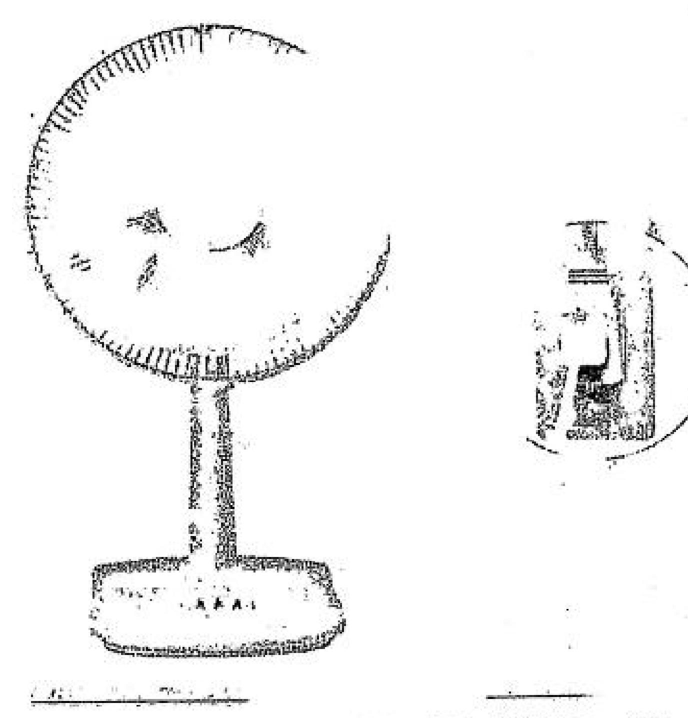

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Gloria-Erap battle shifts to elections

(From page A1)

and the lobbying are gaining steam, not only in preparation for May 14, but in the race to land the second most powerful political position in the land.

56 for Drilon

Amid intense lobbying by groups supporting different candidates for the coveted vice presidency, a bipartisan group of 56 congressmen yesterday came out to endorse Sen. Franklin Drilon.

The group, composed of the 25-member Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino "conscience bloc," led by Deputy Speaker Carlos Padilla, and other lawmakers, issued two resolutions saying that Drilon was the "most qualified and deserving among the candidates for the vice presidency."

The other top contenders for the vice presidency are Senate President Aquilino Pimentel and Sen. Teofisto Guingona, the Lakas president.

Yesterday, the group of lawmakers said that Drilon's integrity was beyond reproach and that his leadership and competence were beyond question, citing his stint in the executive branch where he served as Executive Secretary to former President Corazon Aquino.

They also noted that Drilon lost the Senate presidency only when he bolted the LAMP coalition and called for the resignation of former President Estrada at the height of the "Juetengate" scandal.

Hard to get

On the sidelines of the preparations for the May 14 battle, popular broadcaster and senatorial aspirant Noli de Castro is playing hard to get.

Despite being named Wednesday as a senatorial candidate of the PMP, De Castro is now considering running under Executive Secretary Renato de Villa's Reporma, one of four parties swept to power by Edsa II that have formed a coalition tentatively named the "Edsa Forces."

In a bizarre media moment on ABS-CBN's TV Patrol, which De Castro anchors, a reporter quizzed him on his political plans at the end of a news spot on the anchor's candidacy.

De Castro told the reporter he had not made up his mind, and told his audience to "stay tuned (*abangan*)."

An ABS-CBN statement said De Castro was still consulting his family, friends and supporters on the matter of running for the Senate and under what party.

Edsa Forces grumble

But Sen. Raul Roco told reporters in a noontime press conference that he had been informed half an hour earlier that De Castro would join the Edsa Forces as a Reporma candidate.

Roco had earlier said his Aksyon Demokratiko, President Macapagal's Lakas, Reporma, and Lito Osmeña's Promdi would field 12 senatorial candidates under the Edsa Forces' banner.

As expected, the administration ticket for the May 14 polls has an oversupply of candidates—a fact that has caused grumbling among the ranks of all four parties, who are elbowing to get in as many of their own candidates as they can.

Sen. Juan Flavier had earlier said Lakas would have six of the slots and the other six would be divided among the three smaller parties.

Intention

Roco said an emissary of De Castro met yesterday with De Villa's camp to convey his intention to join Reporma.

The broadcaster himself was to meet with De Villa yesterday afternoon to formalize his membership with Reporma, the party used by De Villa when he ran for president in 1998.

De Castro, who is also ABS-CBN vice president for radio, has consistently ranked among the most popular senatorial candidates in media surveys.

Before Estrada was ousted, Malacañang considered De Castro a sure candidate for the Senate.

Joker and Mareng Winnie

Rep. Joker Arroyo and former National Economic Development Authority Director General Solita Monsod have joined Aksyon, Roco said in the press conference.

He said there would be a "soft launching" of Arroyo and Monsod's candidacies during an Aksyon convention today.

Roco said he was hoping the coalition would go all out for Arroyo, who was thrust into the limelight in his role as a House prosecutor in Estrada's impeachment trial, and Monsod, who hosts a TV debate show and writes a column for the INQUIRER.

"How can you resist Joker? He's on top of the surveys," Roco said.

According to Flavier, the Lakas candidates to be fielded under the "Edsa Forces" coalition include himself, Rep. Heherson Alvarez, Rep. Ernesto Herrera, Rep. Sergio Apostol and former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan.

The other candidates are reelectionist Senators Franklin Drilon and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., former Speaker Manuel Villar, lawyer Francis Pangilinan, Arroyo and Monsod.

Roco also said that former Cebu Gov. Lito Osmeña would run again, but would have to register his name as "Lito O" because "Osmeña" would be credited to his cousin, reelectionist Sen. Sergio Osmeña III.

New blood vs. old

At the House of Representatives, battle lines are also being drawn—here, between new blood and old.

Sixty-three neophyte congressmen have signed a manifesto denouncing what they called the intervention of "fourth-term" legislators in the affairs of the House.

The first-termers are protesting in particular the alleged meddling of former congressmen in the distribution of committee assignments and other key posts in the House.

"Fourth-termers" are congressmen who have already spent three consecutive terms in the House and are now in political hibernation since they are not allowed by law to seek a new term.

The new congressmen charged that many of the fourth-termers are pressuring leaders of the chamber to reserve key assignments, including the Speakership, for them when they return in July.

The alleged meddling old-timers named by the neophytes include former Speaker Jose de Venecia, former Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing and former executive secretary and San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora.

Win-win

De Venecia, in a telephone interview, denied the charge, saying the only time he intervened in House affairs was when he convinced former Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella to step down in favor of Feliciano Belmonte before a formal vote for a new Speaker was called last week.

"I wanted a win-win situation, so I did what I did. But that was the only time because I wanted to reduce the tension and conflict at the House of Representatives," De Venecia explained.

The neophytes argued that former congressmen who return to the chamber should be treated as first-termers despite their previous experience in the House.

Among the congressmen who signed the manifesto were Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno, Western Samar Rep. Antonio Eduardo Nachura and Cebu Rep. Clavel Asas-Martinez who acted as prosecutors in Estrada's impeachment trial. ***With a report from AP***

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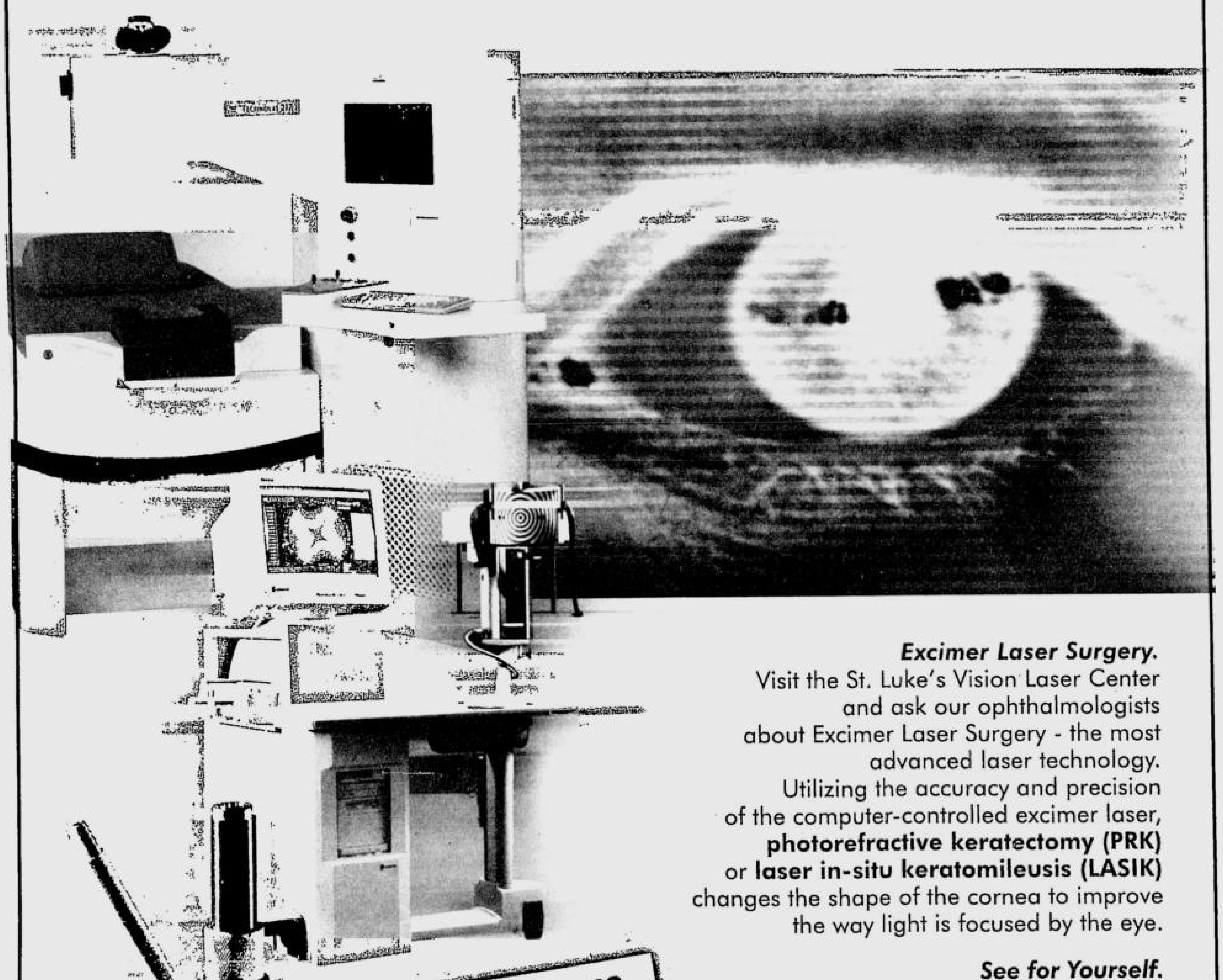

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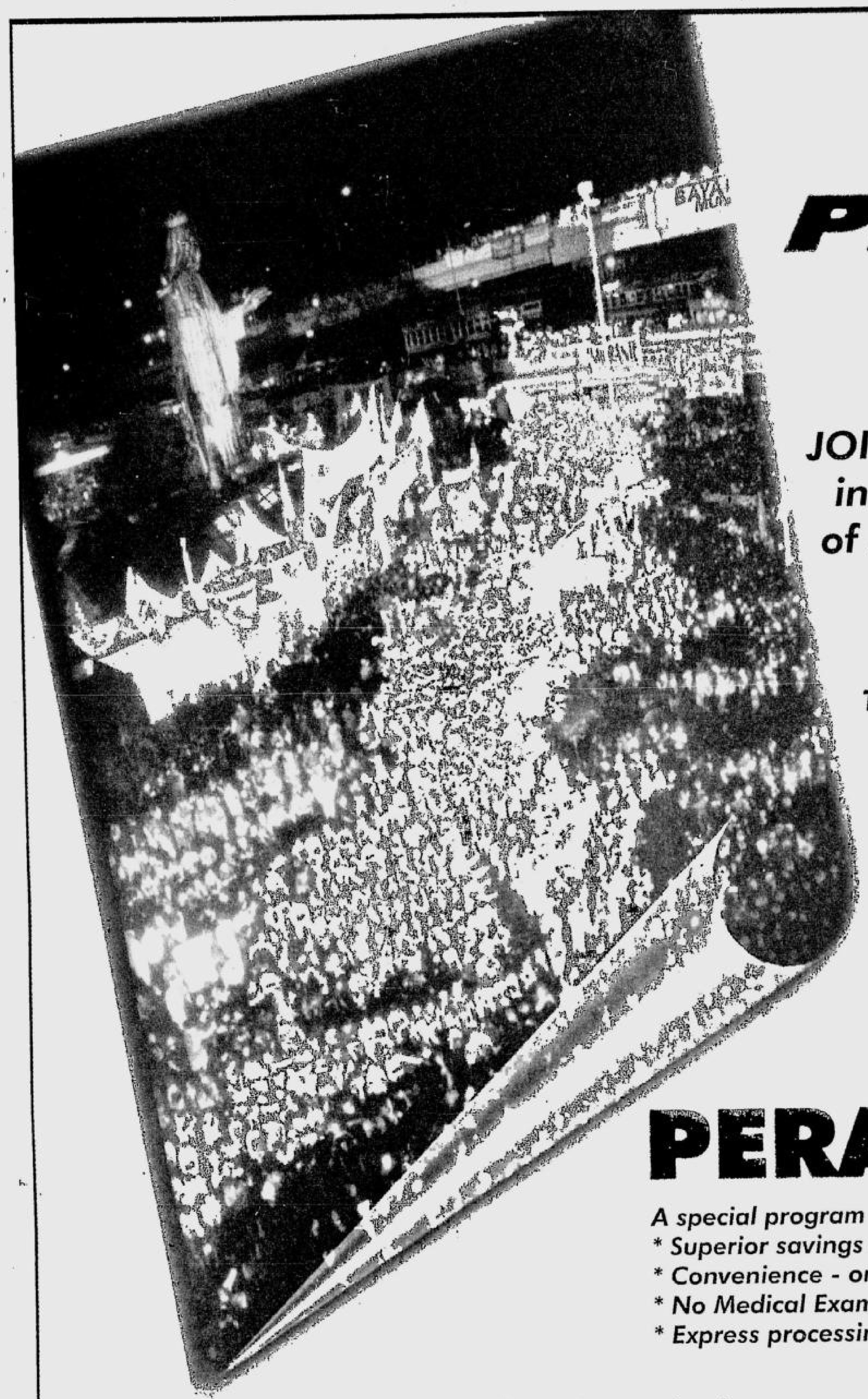

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 16 No. 56
ISSN
0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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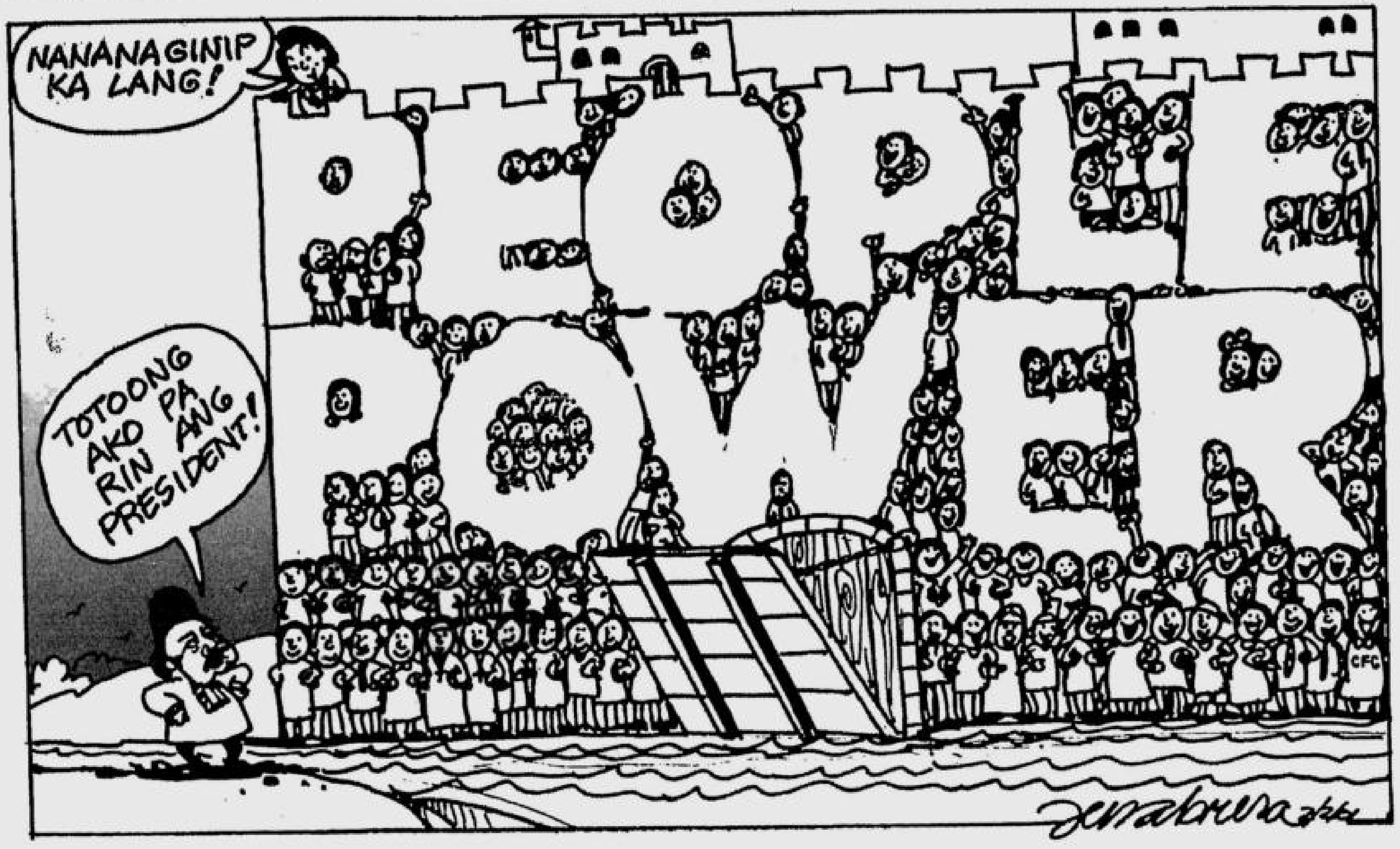
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Final goodbye

EDITORIAL

DON'T believe your eyes. That heart-rending episode you saw on television that Saturday afternoon of Jan. 20 was just melodrama. Those tearful farewells in Malacañang were just an overreaction on the part of everyone present. The funereal ride on the barge was actually a pleasure cruise on the idyllic Pasig River. President Estrada was going on vacation—and not even in some fancy foreign place, but right in his own house on Polk Street in San Juan. Someday he will be back in the Palace by the Pasig, although even he cannot say exactly when. In the meantime, the Filipino people should never forget that they owe him a debt of gratitude. Ever thoughtful about their well-being, he wanted to save them from a bloodbath. And that was the only reason for his heroic decision to go on vacation.

Perhaps Joseph Estrada has been in so many movies that he cannot tell the difference between the real world and the world of make-believe. Either that or the former action star wants to make a comeback—as a comedian. After dropping out of sight for 10 days following his abrupt exit from Malacañang, the disgraced former president made his first public appearance Wednesday before his party mates in the Partido ng Masang Pilipino convention at the Club Filipino. There he told his supporters that he remained the duly elected president, although "now on leave, forced by events and circumstances beyond my control." He said he had "abandoned Malacañang but not my post" and had appointed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as "acting president" by filing a "notice of temporary inability to perform the functions of my office." He pointed out that the Constitution identifies four instances when the vice president shall assume the presidency: the president's resignation, permanent disability, impeachment, or death. "I have not resigned. I have not been convicted in the impeachment trial. I have no permanent disability…I am still very much alive," he said, and therefore Ms Macapagal's hold on the presidency is unconstitutional.

Of course, Estrada was not convicted by the impeachment court: he had 11 Senate allies who made sure of that by blocking the introducing of damning evidence against him. There is no doubt he is alive and suffers no permanent disability. So why did the living, physically able and unconvicted Estrada "abandon" the seat of power that is Malacañang?

Estrada himself explained the circumstances behind his departure from the Palace in a statement he issued to the press shortly before boarding the barge. While expressing "serious doubts" about the constitutionality of Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency, Estrada said he was leaving the Palace "for the sake of peace and in order to begin the healing process of the nation." Then he added: "I leave the Palace of our people with gratitude for the opportunities given to me for service to the people."

There can be no two ways about it: that was as final as any goodbye can be. And if Estrada abandoned Malacañang, as he himself has admitted, that was only because he had given up his post or, to put it in the language of the Constitution, he had resigned from the presidency.

Estrada and his supporters cannot even claim nobility of purpose for his decision like preventing bloodshed or restoring unity and order in society, as he declared in his goodbye statement at Malacañang. Abandoned by his Cabinet and left without any support from the military and the police, Estrada could no longer govern. With tens of thousands of demonstrators marching near the gates of Malacañang, if any blood were to be shed, it would have been Estrada's and that of some people close to him. Stripped of power by the sovereign people, his only option was resignation. It was his safe-conduct pass out of the Palace, and he bought it by announcing that he was leaving.

Estrada says he will take peaceful and legal steps to "pursue justice." Well, he can try although the more prominent members of his defense panel in the impeachment trial, like retired Chief Justice Andres Narvasa and former Justice Secretary Estelito Mendoza, seem to have abandoned him. But he ought to remember that the Supreme Court gave its imprimatur to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to administer the oath of office to Ms Macapagal as President of the Republic. He may argue until his face is blue, but the Court is unlikely to reverse itself on this issue.

Estrada knew he was beaten when he fled from the Palace almost two weeks ago. He should not delude himself into thinking he cannot stay beaten and will be returning to power some time soon. Unlike in the movies, in the high-stakes game of presidential politics, there are no comebacks.

Other nations have only one president each; RP has three

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WE must be a very lucky nation. Whereas other nations have only one president each, we have three: an acting president, a president on leave and a de facto president.

Erap is the professional actor, but it is Macapagal who is the acting president. Who is the de facto president? Fidel V. Ramos. He is supposed to be a former president, but he is still running the country. He is the puppet master pulling the strings of the marionette.

"I remain the duly elected President, now on leave," Erap said in his speech before a pitifully sparse crowd of his Partido ng Masang Pilipino at the Club Filipino in Greenhills the other day. "I abandoned Malacañang but not my post," he added. His successor, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would have to make way for him if and when he ends his leave.

That won't be in a long time because Erap has also taken leave of his senses and of reality. He is "free to dream," was the reaction of Malacañang. "Maybe in his mind, he is still President."

There is an old song that fits Erap today. It is titled "I Can Dream, Can't I?" and the lyrics sound like they were written especially for Erap. They go like this:

"I can see no matter how near you be (meaning the presidency),
"You'll never belong to me,
"But I can dream, can't I…
"For dreams are just like wine,
"And I am drunk with mine…"

You can say that again.

But Erap is not only dreaming, he is also having delusions.

Webster's New World Dictionary describes "dream" as "a fond hope or aspiration." "Delusion" is described as, in psychiatry, "belief in something that is contrary to fact or reality, resulting from deception, a misconception, or a mental disorder."

His legal wife, Dr. Loi Ejercito being a psychiatrist, can explain it further to him—if she has not yet given up after all these years.

But there is a surprising facet to Erap's acting career. He became popular in action movies but his declaration that he is a president-on-leave proves that he is also a comedian. People have not stopped laughing since he said that.

Another funny part of the PMP convention was that the leadership made a list of the party's senatorial candidates but almost all of them declined. The PMP's senatorial ticket is already decimated before the campaign even starts.

Among those listed were Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, former PNP Chief Panfilo Lacson, former Cabinet members Alberto Romualdez, Ronaldo Zamora, Orlando Mercado, Alfredo Lim, Horacio Morales, Bienvenido Laguesma and Dong Puno.

Hagedorn, Romualdez, Lacson, Zamora, Mercado, Lim and Laguesma turned down the draft. Hagedorn, Zamora and Lim would rather run in the local elections. Lacson and Mercado said they would run as independents.

Of the three reelectionist senators in the ticket (Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile and Gringo Honasan)—three of the Dirty Eleven who voted against the opening of the second envelope—Santiago said she would not run but just wait for her appointment to the special international court of the United Nations—another fantasy.

Noli de Castro of ABS-CBN said he has not yet made up his mind but IBC 13's Boots Anson Roa said she would run.

The others are Representatives Gilberto Duavit, Daisy Avance-Fuentes, Luwalhati Antonino, Didagen Dilangalen, Governors Casimiro Yñares and Carlos Fortich, former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez and Jamby Madrigal. Good luck to them.

Curiously, the PMP's senatorial standard-bearer, Dr. Loi herself, did not even show up at the Club Filipino and was reported undecided on her candidacy.

It is said that it is Erap who wants Loi to run, obviously to try to retain power and influence through her if she wins. This just shows again that Erap is a user, said a women's group. Not content with making a martyr out of his wife for many years, he is now going to use her in politics without thinking of what her candidacy would do to her.

Doesn't he know what dirt would be thrown at her once she becomes a candidate? Doesn't he care that she would be humiliated by the speakers in their rivals' political rallies? Doesn't he realize that she has been accused of receiving P30 million in *jueteng* money by Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson? That people would say that a vote for Loi would be a vote for Erap?

She doesn't deserve all that humiliation. Spare her that. She has suffered enough in his hands.

* * *

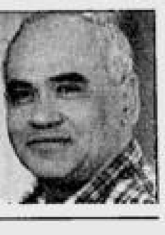
TODAY's Gloria-Miriam joke:

Would you believe that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo put Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago in her Cabinet? Yes, she did.

Then she locked it and threw away the key.

When lightning strikes

WINDMILLS



Jerry Barican

AN AMERICAN vice president self-deprecatingly once told the story of a mother with two sons: "One became a ship's captain and went off to sea. The other was elected vice president of the United States. Neither was ever heard of again." The constitutional function of this high office is to wait for a vacancy in the presidency, hence the famous vice presidential lament: "I am nothing; I could be everything."

Everything, indeed. Since Quezon, every vice president of the Philippines, save only three (Emmanuel Pelaez, Fernando Lopez and Salvador Laurel) ended up president either by constitutional succession or by election. Osmeña, Quirino, Garcia, Macapagal, Estrada and Macapagal-Arroyo were all vice presidents before ascending to the presidency. These odds, not the non-existent powers of the office, are what make it desired.

Under the Constitution, if there is a vacancy, the president can nominate a vice president from among the members of Congress, subject to confirmation by the legislature. There are several front-runners but the choice is probably not simply going to be someone who is able and qualified to do the president's job.

Realistically, he or she is also someone who will be least likely to give political trouble to the incumbent president. Presumably, the president is selecting someone who will behave these next three and a half years, will then submissively agree to be a running mate and then behave again for six more years. The impatiently ambitious need not apply.

There is an additional problem, although in this case the political risk for any nominee is so small indeed as to be almost invisible. There are legal and political challenges issued by Joseph Estrada that have not run their course before the courts. In essence, the issue is simple: if President Estrada never resigned and the incumbent is, as he claims, merely holding the presidency in an acting capacity, then there is no vacancy for vice president left to fill up. By quickly appointing a vice president and necessarily involving Congress in his confirmation, President Macapagal will be cementing her own legal position.

There is a natural antipathy between a president and a vice president. Historically, the two have not mixed well. Few vice presidents see the office as the height of their ambition. A president often suspects his deputy, correctly, of eyeing his job. A president selects his running mate on the basis of helping him win, not with a thought of being succeeded by him.

Consequently, while the "vice" is the constitutional successor, he is rarely the president's political successor. Never in the whole of Philippine history has a sitting vice president been the nominee of his president as his successor. If President Macapagal's nominee for vice president breaks that mold, he will have to wait up to nine and a half years, if Ms Macapagal is reelected, to find it out.

There is another reason for the tension between presidents and vice presidents, especially under our system wherein each is elected independently of the other and not as part of a team. As is often mentioned, the very existence of a vice president, whose sole function is to replace him, reminds the president—any president—of his mortality. And, nowadays, of Edsa.

Presidents react to this in various ways. They keep them very busy with a Cabinet post and presumably out of temptation's way. The other approach, totally ignoring a vice president, can be dangerous. Garcia ignored Macapagal, who used his four years in the wilderness to campaign, successfully, for the top job. One extreme response to this problem came from Ferdinand Marcos. He simply abolished the office of vice president, thereby removing the political reminder of his own mortality. Inevitably, it was a futile attempt.

This tension has made many vice presidents unhappy. The American vice president to FDR, John Nance Garner, described the office in his rural Texan language as not being worth a pitcher of warm piss (spit being the more widely known euphemism for what he actually said).

But lightning does strike. Everyone was writing Carlos Garcia's political obituary until President Ramon Magsaysay died suddenly in that plane crash. Four aides reportedly saw him off at the airport when he left for Australia as vice president; many thousands greeted him when he returned as president such that the four aides couldn't even get near him.

Elpidio Quirino was at odds with the Malacañang staff of President Manuel Roxas. While on board the navy cutter RP Anemone in the middle of a political tour of the south, an officer intruded on a meeting of his political friends with the news that the president had just died of a heart attack at Clark Field. As one story has it, one of those present added to the new chief executive's shock by greeting him with the words, "Congratulations, Mr. President."

This tension of pregnant possibility, between a political miscarriage and the birth of a presidency, is what makes many politicians lust after this seemingly useless office. People aren't really positioning for vice president this year. They are looking at the presidency in 2010, or 2004, or even, should those 10,000 volts strike, at some unforeseen or unforeseeable time between then and now. Selecting a vice president is political insurance. The president is betting he won't be needed; the vice president wagers he will be, now or later.

Take your pick then. Let's not name the candidates lest we inadvertently give offense by neglecting someone. Remember, a mere nine years ago, the President was still an undersecretary of trade and her predecessor a senator. So don't be fearful to address every senator you meet as Mr. or Ms Vice President. And when a vice president is named, whisper the dangling modifier of his title and emphasize the last half in his presence. He probably won't forget it when lightning strikes.

Pathetic

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

JOSEPH Estrada struck a pathetic posture on Wednesday when he claimed at a meeting of his decrepit party at Club Filipino that he was still President of this country. He declared he would take legal and non-violent steps to regain the presidency from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Ms Macapagal, he said, was merely an "acting President," designated by him when he took a leave.

He flexed his arm to demonstrate that he was strong and healthy, and therefore fit for office. But most of us need not be told that fitness for the presidential office does not rest on the muscles of the biceps. Fitness for office rests on what's inside one's head and in the notion that the presidency is not the platform from which to plunder the country, and that the muscles are not the place where brains are located.

It is because of ethical and intellectual bankruptcy that Estrada was thrown out of office by people power. If he did not leave the Palace Sunday afternoon, where he wanted to stay for another five days, the Palace would have been stormed by the angry multitudes and he would have been dragged out with the possibility of his meeting the same fate as Benito Mussolini, who was hanged dangling from his feet after he was deposed. After having been spared that fate, one would have expected Estrada to have more humility. But allowing Estrada to leave with dignity has only made him indulge the cinematic fantasy that he could still return to power.

Estrada's appearance and speech to his routed party followers are the acts of a desperate man who is either using a legal fiction to defend himself from a slew of criminal cases accusing him of corruption and plunder, or is incapable of recognizing political reality. While Estrada and his cohorts deny that they are not destabilizing the new administration, they insist that he has not resigned, and under Section 11, Article VII, of the Constitution he "appointed" Ms Macapagal as "acting President" following "temporary inability to perform the functions of my office." If Estrada is not destabilizing the new administration with his preposterous claims, what then is he doing? Words lose their integrity at the hands of Estrada and his cohorts. It was the people who installed Ms Macapagal into office. The installation was legitimized by the Supreme Court and the support of representatives of key Philippine institutions, including the Armed Forces who withdrew support from Estrada.

When Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., swore-in Ms Macapagal, he rested the decision on a different provision of the Constitution—Section 1, Article II, which says that, "The Philippines is a democratic and republican state. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from it." This provision, according to opinions of some justices, is more consistent with the extraordinary and explosive events flowing from the people power movement on Jan. 19-20 that deposed Estrada. Also, it ties with the doctrine "*salus populi est suprema lex* (the welfare of the people is the supreme law)." In challenging the Court's decision, Estrada is facing a wall and the chances of making the Court reverse its ruling are as much as making Estrada face stark political reality.

What are the chances of Estrada making a comeback? First of all, the Armed Forces is solidly behind the new administration. Secondly, new public opinion polls invest the government with added legitimacy. A Social Weather Stations survey taken on Jan. 27—a week after the installation of the Macapagal administration—in Metro Manila shows that 70 percent of respondents believe that People Power II expressed the sentiment of the majority. Among the AB class, the rating was 70 percent; C (the middle class), 76 percent; D (the lower class), 66 percent; and E (the poorest class), 77 percent. Note that the rating is highest in the poorest class, which Estrada, in his incurable delusion, believes is his natural and strongest constituency. This finding suggests a big shift of the poorest class support away from Estrada during the people power upheaval. This explains why Estrada had resorted to the recruitment of paid mobs at Mendiola to give a semblance that the poor were going to die for him, even though he never shared his plundered wealth to them.

The other significant finding, one having to do with enhancement of legitimacy, is that 53 percent said the replacement of Estrada by Ms Macapagal was acceptable, with 26 percent saying it was not acceptable. Ms Macapagal's net trust rating leaped to +21 percent, from -34 percent in polls taken on Jan. 6-9. Estrada's net trust rating in the new poll plunged to -18 percent from -1 percent. Fifty percent of the respondents expect her to do better as President than Estrada and only 9 percent expect her to do worse. Her net rating is +41, compared to -14 in the Jan. 6-9 survey.

The dramatic regaining by Ms Macapagal of her trust rating not only signifies enhanced legitimacy. It also confirms previous patterns of surveys on new administrations in the past, indicating that change in governments create legitimacy windfall, stemming from the euphoria, and the mentality for people to give their new government a chance. For example, former President Fidel Ramos was elected in 1992 with only 24 percent of the vote. Within a month of his election, his approval rating rose to more than 50 percent. Pollsters call this phenomenon enlargement of mandate beyond what the electoral count shows. To some, this bandwagon effect is due to the joining the winner mentality of Filipino political culture.

The business community responded to the leadership with a show of a return of confidence. For example, a Makati Business Club survey on Jan. 24-31 shows that 65.7 percent of businessmen surveyed said they felt the economy would perform better this year, compared with the results of the Jan. 4-19 survey which showed that 85.3 percent of the respondents said they felt that economic conditions would worsen this year.

These are the hard facts Estrada has to face. They pose insurmountable obstacles to his dream of regaining power.

A Gloria-De Villa administration?

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

LOOKS like it.

The impression that former President Fidel Ramos is the winner in People Power II, that he and his camp are dominating President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's administration, is totally off the mark. It is likely that deposed President Joseph Estrada and his remaining supporters who are even spreading that notion. After all, they've stuck to their original conspiracy theory that Estrada's troubles were all entirely because of Ramos' plot from the start.

Forget Ramos. He's been dispatched to the jet-setting job he's enjoyed since he stepped down from office, as special ambassador to major international forums.

Watch instead another former military man, President Macapagal's executive secretary, the 65-year-old Renato de Villa—who likely would have been president, to spare us of the Estrada episode, if Ramos had endorsed him as his presidential candidate in 1998.

Next to her husband Mike and her brother Diosdado Jr. (Buboy, who curiously has kept an extremely low profile in the past several weeks), Ms Macapagal's closest advisers are believed to be Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo and De Villa. In our last interview with then Vice President Macapagal early last year, Ms Macapagal without any hesitation, mentioned the two men as people she trusts and respects the most.

But it is De Villa who will every day be in Malacañang. Sour grapes among People Power II leaders are even saying that what De Villa failed to get in an electoral contest, he's got now through People Power II and Ms Macapagal.

A key point to understand De Villa's ascendancy is the breakup between him and Ramos when the former President instead chose in 1998 then House Speaker Jose de Venecia as his would-be successor. That split Ramos' core group, with one going for De Villa and the other sticking by De Venecia. De Villa was bitter about Ramos' decision, as his former boss all along had ensured him that he was really his successor. Without Ramos' big-business backing, De Villa and his relatives reportedly had to go into debt to raise the campaign funds for his failed presidential bid.

One indication of De Villa's clout is that it was he who wanted former Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser. While Abadia was once a Ramos man, he had switched allegiance to De Villa away from Ramos and De Venecia in the 1998 elections.

Take a look at President Macapagal's power circle—the people she will see daily at Malacañang—and remember that De Villa is executive secretary, the "Little President":

- **Chief of staff and interim spokesperson Renato Corona.** With his colleague, former presidential counsel Antonio Carpio, Corona was with the group that defied Ramos and backed De Villa to the end in the 1998 election. If the post of executive secretary is one of the two doors to the President's office, the chief of staff position is the second.
- **Chief presidential counsel Avelino Cruz Jr.:** "Nonong" is senior partner at Carpio's law firm Carpio, Villaraza and Cruz. His post is crucial, as Carpio had proven most recently under the Ramos administration: no document can be signed by the President, unless it passes, on grounds of the need for legal scrutiny, the chief legal counsel's desk.

However, one edge for Corona and Cruz is that their channel to President Macapagal hasn't been only through De Villa. Corona was a schoolmate in college and in law school of Ms Macapagal's husband Mike.

- **Presidential Management Staff chief Vicky Garchitorena.** Together with the Ayala conglomerate, where she was managing director for corporate affairs, Garchitorena was with the core group that organized De Villa's campaign in the 1998 presidential election. The PMS is another crucial post: it's actually the information, and even nerve center of the presidency.

Another official believed to be in President Macapagal's innermost circle, though not in the official Malacañang power loop, is businessman **Paul Dominguez,** now presidential adviser on regional development and chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines. Dominguez and his clan—which is part-owner of the now famous Linden Suites, the Macapagal command center in People Power II—were one of the biggest financial backers of De Villa's failed presidential bid in 1998.

It looks like a good team. De Villa's integrity is said to be impeccable, and his modest house at Ayala Heights, in contrast to many generals' mansions at posh areas such as Corinthian Gardens, is a good indication of that.

The team is a mix of people from different backgrounds of the old and the new. The 65-year-old military man. The lawyer Corona and civil society activist Garchitorena in their 50s. The lawyer Cruz and businessman Dominguez in their early 40s.

The big question though, a worry already raised by those involved in People Power II, is whether De Villa's team will degenerate into a cordon sanitaire around the President. Another is whether De Villa's power group will really and totally jettison their former private interests.

* * *

Estrada's attempt to reclaim the presidency is ludicrous. If it's just to ensure that no criminal charges are filed against him, it'll be at an unneeded cost to the country. No matter how we argue that Ms Macapagal is our legitimate President de jure and de facto, Estrada's claim will still be in investors' political risk reports for the country.

If he had just resigned, Estrada could have spared the country from the damage our institutions suffered because of the failure of the impeachment trial. He is losing any remaining shred of decency in him with his insistence that he is still President, and that he had only gone on leave.

Estrada just doesn't have a political power base left. Elected President in 1965, Marcos had two decades to build up as overlord his political base, especially in the Ilocos region, and through his wife Imelda in the Visayas. Estrada had just a little over two years to build up a redoubt in…San Juan?

Marcos during his term managed to build up business conglomerates loyal to him. Estrada's are shady Chinese-Filipino wheeler-dealers. Will the likes of Dante Tan, Lucio Co and Atong Ang spend a centavo now for Estrada to reclaim the presidency? Lucio Tan? If you haven't noticed, he had quietly distanced himself from Estrada last year.

The only power bloc that could pose a threat to President Macapagal, if it still backed Estrada, would be that of San Miguel chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. But he was conspicuously absent in the convention of Estrada's party the other day.

Even before the political crisis broke out in October, we understand that Cojuangco already had given up on Estrada and was having regular meetings with Macapagal. The President's problem really won't be Cojuangco. It will be explaining the support she's got from Cojuangco to the rabidly anti-Cojuangco civil society crowd.

* * *

Comments: rtiglao@inq7.net

Mike and Mikey

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THANKS to Eveline Pozon for finally settling one of the more contentious issues arising from the oath-taking of President GMA at the Edsa Shrine. Not whether Gloria is the "legitimate" or just "acting" President of this country, silly, but who that "woman in black" was. Turns out it was Pozon herself.

You're right, Ma'am, hyperbole is one of the tools writers reach for when they're looking for easy laughs. But in the case of your public performance at the Edsa Shrine stage that morning, I think I was actually restrained in describing the details.

You don't have to take my word for it, since the entire country must have been watching that occasion. Edna Anton, a Baguio resident, e-mailed her reactions, portions of which I quote below: "I just finished reading "Reply from 'lady in black'"…and I beg to disagree…I was tuned in to ANC and saw how the lady in black positioned herself on stage, right in front of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel during the oath taking of our new President…At that point, I felt peeved because the photo op on a very historic and momentous occasion would have been ruined by someone who was not a member of the President's immediate family, nor a high official in government. From what I saw on television, it was a lady security aide who "bodily" transferred the lady in black to the back row, behind the Macapagal-Arroyo children, paving the way for a picture perfect oath taking…"

Anyway, thanks for settling the issue. We can now sleep better at night knowing the "lady in black" has a name.

* * *

STILL on President GMA's oath-taking, I was watching the morning ceremony at the newsroom of dzAR, Angel Radyo 1026, where I do a weekly noontime radio show called "XYZone." As the oath-taking neared, the young women "Angels" began to ooh and aah as two young men in barongs squeezed their way through the crowded stage (no thanks to the likes of Ms Puzon). "*Sino 'yan?*" they crooned, "*mga papa-ble!*"

Of course the women thought they made for even better boyfriend material when I told them the young men were the new President's sons, Mikey and Dado. The incident stayed in my mind because "papa-ble" is a label that hasn't exactly been attached to the previous President's "eligible" sons, Jude and JV, even if they were "*medyo*-showbiz."

Anyway, I got to know more about Mikey when I caught him on Inday Badiday's radio show some days later. He was explaining his dilemma about being caught between those who believe he should drop his bid for vice governor of Pampanga (to dispel accusations of dynasty building), and those who say he should keep his promise to his "followers" and party mates.

I don't think Mikey has any illusions that if he were the son of, say, someone like Ms Puzon, and not of President GMA, that he would stand a chance of winning as vice governor in Pampanga. At least not at such a young, untested age. But precisely because he's so young, he can afford to wait. And if his mother does a creditable job as President, why, he'd be a shoo-in in 2004!

* * *

BUT even if he drops his electoral bid for now, I don't think Mikey should drop out of public life just yet.

From what I heard on radio, he strikes me as quite charming and disarming. He has no qualms about admitting his weaknesses, and confesses to enjoying the company of people like April Boy Regino, the "Jukebox King" and King of Local Kitsch. A fondness for April Boy may not say much about Mikey's taste in music, but it holds out the promise of Mikey serving as the bridge between his rather intimidating mother and the *masa* and the youth.

I've met his sister Luli who is rather reserved, and judging from the way he avoids the media, Dado seems to share some of this shyness, too. But Mikey, unabashedly unapologetic about his half-baked acting career (if you can call playing sidekick to April Boy a career), seems to have enough chutzpah for the three of them. If Erap could count on the likes of Richard Gomez to reach out to the young and the star struck, Mikey could very well be GMA's answer. He could provide the dash of humanity and humor that his formidable mother is sometimes hard-put to produce.

* * *

WHICH brings us to another man in President Gloria's life.

The latest (actually the second) issue of the newest newsmagazine in town "Newsbreak," edited by Marites Danguilan Vitug with Noel Tolentino as publisher, contains a "Crossfire" feature on an issue best termed as "What to do with Mike Arroyo?"

Larry Henares, saying the First Gentleman will thank "Uncle Larry" for this advice, suggests GMA follow Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's formula and "have Mike gift-wrapped and delivered gratis et amore to all the pretty girls of her realm." Kiko Pangilinan, lawyer, broadcaster and aspiring senatorial candidate, knows what it means to be married to a powerful, well-known and wealthy spouse, his wife being the Megastar Sharon Cuneta. Though with tongue in cheek, Kiko says he believes their marriage works because, as a member of Uhaw (Union of Husbands Afraid of Wives), he subscribes to the tenet that goes "My wife goes her way and I, the husband, go her way."

That's the choice left to First Gentleman, then: stay away and fly below the radar, or follow your wife's lead, walking a few steps behind like any dutiful consort. Unfortunately for him, the public loves it when the wife or a child (think Mikey or Kris) takes a high profile, but I have a suspicion it won't be so tolerant of a husband who tries to play any kind of important role in his wife's administration. Resist the impulse.

Luna–general, chemist, writer

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ANTONIO Luna's most reproduced photograph shows him in his military uniform, his arms crossed, his handlebar moustache combed for the "photo op." Is this photograph largely responsible for his textbook reputation as the greatest general of the Filipino-American War? Even the late great Teodoro A. Agoncillo could not make a dent on Luna's popular image. Agoncillo related how, on a tour of Malacañang, Ferdinand Marcos pointed to a bust of Luna and boasted that he was a descendant. Agoncillo sighed inaudibly, "well that's your misfortune." When I asked Agoncillo to explain why, he declared that Luna was a great general who did not win a single battle. That remark changed the way I looked at Luna, it made me dig deeper to find other facets of his life and personality not recorded in our textbooks.

Few people know that Luna was a pharmacist trained in the Institut Pasteur in Paris. If I were more competent in science I would comment on his studies on the composition of the Pasig River, the purity of carabao milk and even the spread of malaria. I ignored Luna's scientific papers including notebooks filled with detailed drawings of things he saw under a microscope. These are long gone, burned in a fire. What makes the loss more painful is the fact that Luna's personal archive survived the Philippine Revolution, the Filipino-American War, World War II—all it took was a freak accident on a stormy night and all was lost to history. Fortunately for Luna there are two largely overlooked sources for a study of Luna: the reformist newspaper La Solidaridad and the revolutionary paper La Independencia. From Luna's body of published work we see the chemist and general as a writer, but also trace his development from reformist to revolutionary. Luna's writings reflect a continuity from the reformist paper La Solidaridad to the revolutionary and separatist La Independencia.

Most of the essays in La Solidaridad can be found in a regular column called "Artes y Letras" (Arts and Letters). From descriptions of a tertulia to guitar playing, Luna covered much ground even writing a two-part review of Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo." In 1889 when he began contributing to La Solidaridad, Luna wrote from Paris covering the 1889 Exposition largely remembered today for the Eiffel Tower. While writing on something as banal as the Expo, Luna made comparisons between the Spanish and French colonies. When Luna moved to Madrid, his articles were reflections on life in the Spanish capital as an expatriate Filipino student. The most interesting articles dealt with homesickness during Christmas, masquerade balls and the clandestine sex that went on in theater boxes.

What kept Luna from writing more was, as he claims, irregularities in the management of La Solidaridad. By this time Jose Rizal had decided to leave Madrid and the propaganda movement. Luna kept him abreast of Madrid affairs in a letter dated Sept. 12, 1891 and reads in part:

"…Man's exploitation of man…I refer particularly to the situation of the staff writers of La Solidaridad, I being one of them. They say that the society has money and sends much money to Spain to pay those who work and write. Letters they read to me say so. Consequently, if this is true, it seems that we are playing the part of simpletons, inasmuch as in the Philippines they give in the belief that La Solidaridad pays and renumerates. And it is not worthwhile to talk here of patriotism for what happens here is the following: personal enthusiasm and activity are exploited for the simple reason that what is assigned to one is taken away from him. All this has made me rebel, for here I am told that I am playing a rather sad role....As a special favor that came from you, they assigned me eight *duros* a month. It is exactly one year that, despite my fulfillment of my duties and working more than is required, I have not yet received any promotion that will encourage me to continue. I write two, three, or more articles for each issue, as you will see, nevertheless, despite stealing time from school duties, I find myself with the salary of a *carromata* driver without hope of rising further. If it is true that they are sending thousands of *duros*, on what they spent, where are they invested?"

Madrid was polarized in two camps—the Rizalistas and Pilaristas—one was either for Jose Rizal or Marcelo H. del Pilar and Luna was a Rizalista working under Del Pilar. Luna complains that Del Pilar and Mariano Ponce hardly write, forcing him to cough up four articles to fill one issue. Luna complains about his meager pay that can at most buy biscuits, "Man of God! By the nails of Christ! This is not funny and it is very insulting! Biscuits for the patriots? What will it be for those who work? Ensaimadas? With butter or without?" Luna contemplates resignation.

By October 1891, Luna leaves La Solidaridad but his byline still appears probably because he still had articles on file and Del Pilar had nothing else to use. Luna's last signed article appears in the issue for Jan. 15, 1892, his column "Artes y Letras" taken over by Jose Ma. Panganiban. Through Luna we see division between our heroes.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

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LETTERS

First prosecute Erap and his cronies

THE HERCULEAN task of removing Joseph Estrada from power has been carried out through the sweat, blood and tears of the people themselves. Prominent personalities have been lauded for People Power II, but it is the people who ultimately made it happen again. It is in fact the militant groups which started the oust-Estrada campaign as early as 1999. It would be sheer injustice to accord them any less.

But the removal of Estrada from power is only the first step toward genuine healing. The mistakes of post Edsa I, where the Marcoses were able to go scot-free despite their crimes against the people, must never be committed again. Estrada should be prosecuted criminally and civilly. He must not be given immunity for the charges of bribery, graft, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution.

Estrada's cronies and bosom buddies must also be prosecuted, or at the very least investigated, for their involvement in various scams and shady deals. Aside from Estrada's notorious taipan friends, this would also include El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde who reportedly forged a P1.2-billion real estate deal with the previous administration.

It is incumbent on the Macapagal administration to immediately act on the matter. Efforts toward peace and nation-building can only be true once justice is met. President Macapagal owes this to the people who installed her in office. In the same breath, she owes it to the people to implement pro-people policies such as the resumption of peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front and Moro Islamic Liberation Front, release of political prisoners, raising of workers' wages, implementation of genuine agrarian reform and the like.

Now is not the time to be complacent. It is, more than anything, important for the people to remain vigilant and continue to actively work for fundamental changes in society. It is an integral part of our mission as Christians in building the Kingdom of God here on earth now.—**REV. FR. JOSE P. DIZON, convenor, Kairos Philippines, 172 West Riverside St., SFDM, Quezon City**

Unfair imputations

IT saddens me that some sectors allegedly close to President Macapagal are reportedly "uneasy" over my personal friendship with former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, and citing it as a factor in the selection process for the vice presidency. (PDI, 1/24/01)

My personal and professional association with Angara goes a long way. He is my fraternity brother and was a colleague in the Accra law firm and in the Senate. We may have shared a common past but on matters of national interest, Angara and I take independent positions.

On Nov. 3, 2000, I made an act of conscience by bolting the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino and calling for the resignation of then President Estrada. I eventually lost the Senate presidency as a result of my decision to sever my ties with the Estrada administration. Angara chose to stay on but I never wavered in my personal conviction.

Interestingly, nobody raised the issue of friendship then. It is unfortunate that some people find it now convenient to impute disloyalty to President Macapagal simply on the basis of my personal association with a Cabinet member of the past administration. This is totally unfair.

Let no one doubt my unflinching loyalty to good governance and the national interest. I will never allow personal friendship to dictate on my conscience.–**SEN. FRANKLIN M. DRILON**

Investments expected to flow back

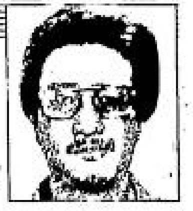
FILIPINOS have set the model for how to conduct a revolution that can only be the envy of other suffering countries. I have little doubt (having worked for them and with them for over 35 years) that multinationals will now revive their interest in the Philippines. It will take a little time, but investments will start to flow back and we expect the economy to be back on track by next year and growing steadily from thereon.

I only hope that the criminality and venality that have been exposed will not go unpunished. Philippine society needs to send the message that the rich and powerful can't get away with plunder, or any other criminal activity.

Difficult days lie ahead, but the Filipino spirit will prevail.—**PETER WALLACE, president, The Economist Intelligence Unit Philippines Inc., 14th Floor, Sagittarius Bldg., H.V. dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City**

Keeping the flame alive

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER that during the impeachment trial, friends and foes of Erap alike were protesting the protests that were being held outside the Senate grounds. Among them was Nene Pimentel who suggested that the protesters were an unruly lot and thought he was vindicated when they beat up a truck driver whom they took to be a hired goon. Before that, Pimentel had told the protesters to leave the fate of Erap to the legal process, which was already in place, and trust in the wisdom of the Senate. He himself, he said, would not bow down to the wishes of anybody, but would make sure the trial would be objective and fair.

He wasn't alone to take that view. Many other senator-judges were saying the same thing, as indeed some prosecution lawyers themselves. The members of the defense of course were all screaming for an end to the protests, which, they said, constituted undue interference in the proceedings. They even wanted media banned from the hall, or constrained in every possible way, arguing that its merits could not be weighed outside the court.

I remember being furious at these objections and applauded when Teddy Casiño came out on TV to say that he personally saw no conflict between the parliament of the streets and the parliament of the Senate, between the court of public opinion and the court of Hilario Davide Jr. The parliament of the streets was not there to bury the truth, it was there to help bring the truth to light. The court of public opinion was not there to pressure the senator-judges to find Erap guilty, it was there to pressure the senator-judges to vote according to the evidence and not according to their loyalties. The parliament of the streets had every legal, philosophical and practical right to stand side by side with the parliament of the Senate. People power had every legal, philosophical and practical right to stand side by side with constitutional power.

The truth of that contention was proven only a few weeks later. As Pimentel himself discovered, the parliament of the streets, far from being subversive of the parliament of the Senate, was its natural support. The court of public opinion, far from being the gravedigger of the truth, was its natural exhumer. Without people power—the highest expression of the parliament of the streets and the court of law—neither the Senate of Pimentel nor the court of Davide would have resolved the case of Joseph Ejercito vs. the people of the Philippines successfully.

I do not know why the two parliaments or courts cannot stand side by side even now.

I've been asked many times over the past couple of weeks how we may not fritter away the gains of People Power II, my e-mail in particular resonating loudly with that question. Well, all of us will have to pitch in to answer it. I myself think, as far as concrete and specific proposals go, that we should find ways to extend the kind of education the public got from watching the impeachment trial. One way to do that is by televising the Senate proceedings, or at least the more important ones, such as the budget debate, or blue ribbon or peace and order committee hearings. Complete with annotations from experts, though with more aesthetic (or less boring) camera work and spiels to make up for the arguably less dramatic aspect of that fare. The floor is open to suggestions.

But I do have a definite idea about the general direction we may take to not allow People Power to go to waste, which is the proposition above. That is to keep the parliament of the streets, or the court of public opinion, as vibrant as it was during the last three months and stick it to the side of government and the courts of law like a thorn. Or like *amorseko*, a constant reminder of where we tread.

At the very least, that is so because we remain in a state of emergency. Our experience with the first Edsa should have given us sufficient lessons in that respect. The most critical period is not the last few moments when a tyrant is toppled, it is the first few moments when a new world is built. People Power does not always have to take the form of rallies or protests, it can always take the form of organized vigilance and principled criticism. It does not always have to take the form of the physical massing of people, it can always take the form of the virtual unleashing of public opinion. The past months have given me to see a phenomenon as breathtaking as Edsa II and that is the birth of a global Filipino community in cyberspace. Expatriate Filipinos were as much a part of People Power II as those living in this country. They kept track of events in near-real time, and made themselves heard to very real effect.

Never mind the stupid observations of foreign journalists who parachute into this country and say people power equals mob rule. They do not have to suffer the consequences of their ignorance, we do. If we needed People Power before at the critical moment when Erap might have escaped the judgment of history, then we need People Power now at the critical moment when Gloria might ignore the judgment of her people. I am glad that groups like Kompil and Copa and Pagbabago have not seen fit to disband but have instead compelled the new President to recall the appointment of Lisandro Abadia, which was a horrendous idea to begin with.

More than this, I don't know that we can't do with People Power for longer than the transition period. This country has been in a state of emergency for ages, it will remain in a state of emergency for—well, let us hope for not as long. This is a country whose institutions—civil service, the courts, Congress, law enforcement, education, the Church—have a tendency to separate themselves from the people's interests when left to themselves. They need reminding, and who better to remind them what they are there for than the people themselves. I've always believed, to repeat what I said in my reply to Time, that what made America strong was not that it had a strong government but that it had a strong people. I always believed that what made America a true democracy was not that it had leaders who did not murder and steal but that it had a people that would not allow them to do so.

Ensuring that Gloria hires the right people for the job is just one-half of the task. The other half is ensuring that the people will ensure that they will do what they are supposed to do. I should think the second is the bigger, or more critical task. Though it is the less glamorous one, and offers only huge psychic, and not financial, rewards.

But, well, psychics have been known to love life, and have less heart disease.

Erratum

THE AUTHOR of yesterday's Youngblood article, "Bluskies from the sky," was Eugene Lee. L. Barinaga, not Edwin Lee L. Barinaga. We regret the error.—**Ed.**

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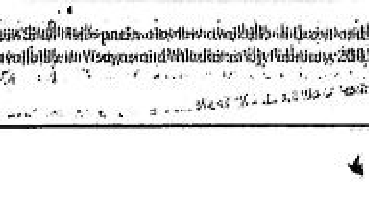

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2. For every roll of film (ANY BRAND) processed at participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops, a customer will get ONE (1) Triple Photo Panalo raffle coupon on which he/she must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/ DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop it at its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.
3. For purchase of any FUJIFILM or YKL CAMERA, a customer gets a raffle coupon. One (1) raffle coupon per transaction. Customer must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop the coupon in its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.

C. Rules

1. Promo duration: This promotion will start on January 26, 2001 and will end on June 11, 2001.
2. The GRAND RAFFLE DRAW will be held on June 28, 2001 at Eat Bulaga noontime show, GMA-Channel 7 with the presence of DTI, YKL, and Jimenez D'Arcy representatives.
3. Last day of submission of entries will be on June 11, 2001.
4. 106 winners (6 grand prizes and 100 consolation prizes).
5. Allocation of Prizes:
   a. Film Box Category:
      - Two (2) winners of Ford F-150 Lariat A/T 2000 (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS)
      - Thirty-three (33) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (16-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).

   b. Photofinishing/Developing Category:
      - Two (2) winners of Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
      - Thirty-three (33) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (16-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).

   c. Camera Category:
      - Two (2) winners of Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
      - Thirty-four (34) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (17-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
6. A winner can only win once. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize in all categories. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. Winners shall be asked to present their claim stub portion of the raffle coupon (for photofinishing and camera category) and any of the following identification papers (School/company ID, driver's license, any ID with picture).
8. Employees of YKL, Jimenez D'Arcy and participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops and their representatives, including relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
9. Winners will be announced via print ads and will be notified by registered mail as to where he/she can claim the prize. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification. Winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 Cameras can claim their prize at corresponding YKL owned store specified in the registered mail. Winners of Ford F-150 Lariat A/T 2000, Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 and Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle can be claimed from Mr. Sonny Tovas at YKL head office at 24 Sto. Domingo Road, Quezon City. Prizes not claimed within the given period will be forfeited in favor of YKL. with prior approval of DTI.
10. The winner agrees to pay the 20% withholding tax on prizes more than P10,000.

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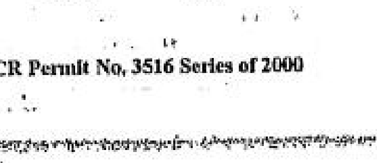

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30% OFF
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Before: P9,710 NOW P6,795
30% OFF
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Before: P2,650 NOW P1,850
30% OFF
EL-2979Y Computer table
Before: P3,565 NOW P2,495
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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

Solons demand Wahid censure over scandals

JAKARTA—Lawmakers demanded on Thursday that Indonesia's president be made to answer for two corruption scandals, raising the specter of a constitutional crisis for the world's fourth-most populous nation and possible impeachment proceedings.

Police estimated that as many as 10,000 protesters, most calling for head of state Abdurrahman Wahid to quit, were on the streets. Some brawled with small groups of pro-Wahid supporters outside the heavily guarded parliament as lawmakers debated what action should be taken against him.

Wahid has denied any wrongdoing and insists that parliament has no right to question his actions or demand his dismissal.

Earlier this week, a report by a parliamentary committee implicated Wahid in the two multimillion-dollar scandals, but presented no criminal evidence against him.

A showdown between the legislature and the president seemed inevitable Thursday after the three largest parties in the assembly demanded he be forced to explain his role in the affairs.

One small party demanded Wahid resign immediately. A faction representing Indonesia's politically powerful military also gave cautious support to calls for an official censure, although it said there was no direct proof that Wahid had acted illegally.

"The house must send a formal reprimand to the president," said Laksamana Sukardi of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle. It has the most seats in the parliament and is headed by Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri, Wahid's possible successor.

Ahmad Farhan Hamid, who heads a coalition of reform-minded parties, accused Wahid of misleading to the people of Indonesia.

"We have no more hope from this government," he said.

Only Wahid's own National Awakening Party defended the president.

A vote to formalize the censuring of Wahid is expected later Thursday.

Under Indonesian law, Wahid—Indonesia's first democratically elected head of state in 45 years—will have three months to answer the parliament's demands of accountability. If he fails to respond satisfactorily to the assembly, it can grant him another month to do so. After that, impeachment proceedings can be launched.

Meanwhile, thousands of students who want Wahid to quit gathered at nearby Trisakti University, a hotbed of dissent in the dying days of the dictatorship of former President Suharto, who quit amid protests and riots in 1998.

"Wahid is corrupt. He must resign," said Anwar Arif, who was among about 2,000 student protesters ready to march on parliament from another campus at the University of Indonesia. Many carried sticks and some wore surgical masks in case police use tear gas to disperse them.

At the presidential palace, Wahid met government ministers, including Defense Minister Mohamad Mahfud, who has warned that the military could intervene if protests escalate.

Megawati was also present at the Cabinet meeting. Wahid outmaneuvered her when lawmakers elected him over her to the presidency 15 months ago. Ironically, Megawati's support is seen as key to his political survival now. *AP*

US, Britain stand firm on UN sanctions on Libya

WASHINGTON—The United States and Britain Wednesday welcomed the conviction of a Libyan for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing that killed 270 people, but stood firm in demanding Tripoli accept responsibility and compensate the victims' families before UN sanctions are lifted.

"I want to assure the families and victims, the United States government will continue to pressure Libya to accept responsibility for this act and to compensate the families," said President George W. Bush.

"We expect Libyan authorities to take full responsibility for the action of their official," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said through a spokesperson after the verdict from a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands.

The court convicted one of two Libyans charged with planting the suitcase bomb which brought down Pan Am Flight 103 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie killing all 259 people aboard—including 189 Americans—and 11 on the ground.

The three-judge court, wrapping up an 84-day trial, found Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, 48, guilty of bombing and sentenced him to life in a Scottish prison with no possibility of parole for 20 years, to be deported "if and when he is released."

The second Libyan accused, Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, 44, was acquitted.

"Nothing can change the suffering and loss of this terrible act. But I hope the families do find some solace that a guilty verdict was rendered," said Bush, confronting the first major international development of his 11-day presidency.

A spokesperson said the British leader was "glad justice has been done," but emphasized: "We also expect them (Libya) to pay compensation as awarded by the courts, and this and other requirements are laid down in the United Nations Security Council resolutions and are obligatory on Libya."

He said an amount of $700 million had been set by the US courts.

In a statement released shortly after the verdict, the White House praised the decision as "a victory" for international justice but insisted that the conviction "does not in itself" spell an end to UN sanctions.

Those sanctions, including an embargo on commercial flights and some trade, as well as a freezing of assets, were suspended in April 1999 when Tripoli agreed to hand over the two suspects for trial.

But they are to be lifted only when Libya has complied with UN demands to take responsibility for the actions of its officials—if convicted—and to pay appropriate compensation, Washington and London insist.

"The Government of Libya has not yet satisfied these requirements," the White House said.

"Libya cannot be expected to be accepted as part of the law-abiding community unless it meets all those obligations," the Blair spokesperson stressed.

Libya said Wednesday it respected the Lockerbie verdict, but made no move to accept responsibility, calling instead for "the immediate lifting of the sanctions" as well as reparation for the losses they had caused.

"Libya, as a state, has no responsibility in this affair, which is a judicial affair," foreign ministry spokesperson Hassuna al-Shawsh told a press conference in Tripoli. *AFP*

Indians angry over 'botched' relief efforts

NEW DELHI—The focus of anger generated by India's earthquake disaster switched firmly Thursday from shoddy constructors to the incompetence of those coordinating the massive relief effort.

The Indian media led the charge, accusing the government in New Delhi and the quake-hit western state of Gujarat of failing the victims in their hour of need and wasting money on politically motivated tours of the worst-hit areas.

The Times of India described the relief situation in Gujarat as one of "overwhelming confusion," even as aid supplies poured in from around the world.

"The tragedy is not that there is no one to help, it is the opposite," the Times said in an editorial.

"Relief is coming in a tidal wave . . . but there is no direction in these efforts.

"Public confidence has been badly shaken, less by the quake itself than the manner in which it has been handled," said the newspaper, whose only praise was for the rapid response of the armed forces.

The Calcutta-based Statesman newspaper described the relief effort as "botched, mismanaged and callously uncoordinated" and gave a harsh response to warnings by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee that the government may introduce special budgetary measures to help pay for the disaster.

"Before you ask the people to make sacrifices Mr. Vajpayee, ask your administrators to work," the newspaper said.

The Indian Express slammed the long list of senior politicians, including Vajpayee and several of his Cabinet colleagues, who had visited Gujarat and conducted aerial surveys of the quake-hit region. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Palestinians ready to resume talks

GAZA CITY—The Palestinian Authority said Wednesday it was ready to resume peace negotiations right away—on condition that the Israeli delegation has a mandate to conclude an agreement. In a statement, the Authority said it "is ready to continue the talks from today (Wednesday) or tomorrow (Thursday) if the Israeli leadership makes the decision" and mandates a delegation to take part, according to the official Wafa news agency. *AFP*

Timor administration extended 1 year

UNITED NATIONS—The Security Council extended the UN's administration of East Timor for a year on Wednesday, while noting that the former Indonesian-occupied territory might become independent before then. Stressing "the need for a substantial international presence in East Timor after independence," the council asked UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to report back with detailed proposals within six months. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor was established on Oct. 25, 1999, after Indonesia relinquished control of the territory in the wake of a four-to-one vote for independence. *AFP*

EU: Suu Kyi-junta talks significant

BANGKOK—Talks between Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's military regime are the most significant contact between the two sides in a decade, but negotiations remain sensitive and could yet fall flat, a European Union official said Wednesday. The process of reconciliation is "not yet irreversible," said Borje Ljunggren, head of the Asia department of the Swedish Foreign Ministry. The five-member EU delegation met separately with senior figures in the Burma regime and Suu Kyi, who has been confined to her Rangoon home since Sept. 22. *AP*

Greece abolishes death penalty

ATHENS—Greece has made changes to its Constitution that will outlaw the death penalty except in times of war, the local branch of Amnesty International said on Wednesday. "It is an important step toward abolishing the death penalty at the European and world level," Amnesty said in a statement. Greece has commuted death sentences to life imprisonment since 1974. *AFP*

Britain compensates former POWs in Japan

LONDON—Thousands of British servicemen held prisoner by the Japanese during World War II will begin receiving payments Thursday of $14,500 each, the government said. The payments are part of a landmark plan announced in November that will ultimately cover up to 16,700 ex-prisoners, including civilians, military veterans and widows. Government officials said payments would be sent immediately to 14,000 former prisoners of war or their spouses. Successive British governments had resisted paying the ex-POWs compensation, not wanting to open the door to other such claims. More than 12,400 of the 50,016 British service personnel reported captured by the Japanese perished. *AP*

Putin, Bush hold first phone talks

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin took his first phone call Wednesday from US counterpart George W. Bush, vowing to build strong ties with Washington but taking the time to intercede on behalf of jailed ex-aide Pavel Borodin. Putin said he wanted to establish an "intense dialogue" with the Bush administration, hoping the two sides would find "rational, mutually acceptable solutions" to their outstanding disputes, the Kremlin press service said. And while Putin did not specifically call for the release of Borodin—jailed in New York under Swiss corruption charges—he "expressed hope that (the case) would be solved based both on legal and humanitarian principle." The Kremlin said Bush responded to Putin's request with "understanding." *AFP*

Germany to join cull to end mad cow crisis

BERLIN—Germany said Wednesday it will join France and Ireland in killing thousands of older cattle in a drive to solve Europe's mad cow crisis and relieve the pressure on farmers as consumers shun beef for fear of infection.

Germany expects to destroy about 400,000 cattle under a "purchase for destruction" program launched by the European Union last month, government spokesperson Charima Reinhardt said. The EU foresees buying and incinerating up to 2 million cattle by the end of June, at an estimated cost of $1 billion.

Agriculture Minister Renate Kuenast had hesitated to approve the slaughter after farmers and animal rights groups protested against mass slaughters in the fight against the disease, which was first detected in Germany in November. The tally has risen to 25 after testing was stepped up.

Many experts suspect the brain-wasting disease can be transmitted to people who eat infected beef and German consumers have taken fright, pushing beef sales down by half and leaving many farms populated with unwanted animals. Demand for beef has fallen by about a quarter EU-wide.

Kuenast has also pledged a tough line on consumer protection after her predecessor and Germany's health minister stepped down over their botched handling of the crisis.

"She has checked all the alternatives and concluded there is no other way," her spokesperson Sigrun Neuwerth said. "This helps create space in the stalls and clears out the most risky animals."

Under the EU scheme, farmers are being invited to sell animals that are at least 30 months old—the age-group believed most likely to carry the disease. Ministry officials said they hoped it would be as soon as possible, but no date was given.

Gerd Sonnleiter, head of Germany's largest farmers' group, said he was relieved at the decision and said the program should begin quickly regardless of an ongoing spat about who should pay for the crisis. *AP*

JAL jets nearly collide

TOKYO—A total of 42 people were injured when two Japan Airlines (JAL) passenger jets carrying a total of almost 700 people came within moments of colliding, an official and reports said Thursday.

"The final number of casualties rose to 42, including two seriously injured," said a spokesperson for the Tokyo Fire Department.

Those hurt were on board a JAL Boeing 747-400 flight number JL 907, which took emergency action and dived to avoid a JAL DC 10, flight JL 958 west of Tokyo on Wednesday.

The two passenger jets, which were carrying a total of 677 people, escaped collision by just 10 meters, the Jiji Press news agency reported, quoting the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation's investigations.

Nine people suffered injuries serious enough to require hospitalization, including 35-year-old female cabin attendant Akiko Mochizuki and 54-year-old female passenger Asami Iida, the spokesperson said.

"Both of them are conscious, but are in serious conditions," with Mochizuki suffering heavy bruising and Iida with broken hip bones, the spokesperson said.

Jiji Press said one suspected cause of the incident is that incorrect orders were given to the aircraft by a trainee air traffic controller who was in charge.

Immediate confirmation of the report was not available.

The near-disaster occurred over Yaizu in Shizuoka, 150 km west of Tokyo, when the Boeing 747-400 jumbo jet was heading for the southern island of Okinawa from Haneda airport in Tokyo.

The other aircraft had left Pusan, in southeastern South Korea, for Tokyo's Narita airport. *AFP*

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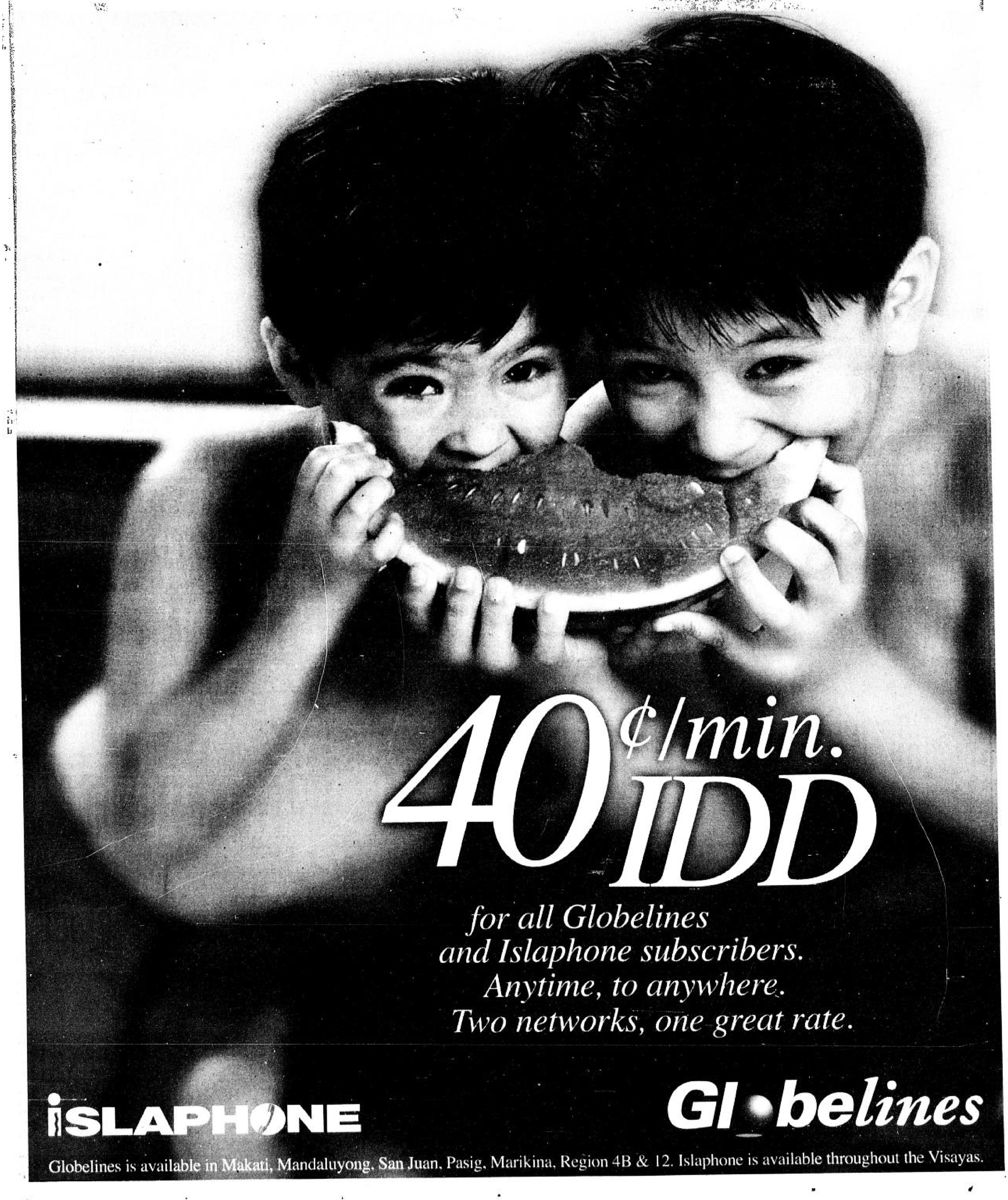

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Serge: GSIS appointee unqualified

BY MALOU GUANZON-APALISOK
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY–Sen. Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III has written President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on Tuesday to question the appointment of lawyer Winston Garcia as president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System.

He pointed out that Garcia's appointment to the state pension body was "very irregular because it does not meet the basic requirement provided for by law."

Osmeña cited Section 44 of Republic Act 8291 or the GSIS Act of 1997 as the basis for the complaint he filed with Ms Macapagal.

The provision explicitly states the qualifications, among others, of the general manager and of other personnel of the GSIS, he added.

"The president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System shall be its executive officer and shall be appointed by the President. He should be a person with management and investment expertise necessary for the performance of his duties," Section 44 states.

Osmeña earlier criticized Garcia's appointment to the GSIS because the senator said Garcia does not have any background on banking and finance and pension fund management.

But Garcia, in a separate interview, said his appointment to the GSIS does not deviate from the law.

Garcia, a former Cebu board member who is closely identified with Promdi chair Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, said the provision cited by the senator "is very broad."

"It can be understood in many ways," he told the INQUIRER.

The newly appointed GSIS executive officer who took over from Federico Pascual, however, said the appointment is "discretionary on the part of the President."

Garcia earlier asked Osmeña to "give me a chance to show that I can be a better general manager" of the GSIS.

But Garcia said he is not bothered by the complaint adding that he will resign if Ms Macapagal decides to recall his appointment.

Garcia said he does not understand why the senator was singling him out, adding that Osmeña could be doing this out of spite.

Senator Osmeña, who is seeking reelection, earlier said his cousin, Lito Osmeña, blocked his inclusion in the administration coalition's senatorial ticket.

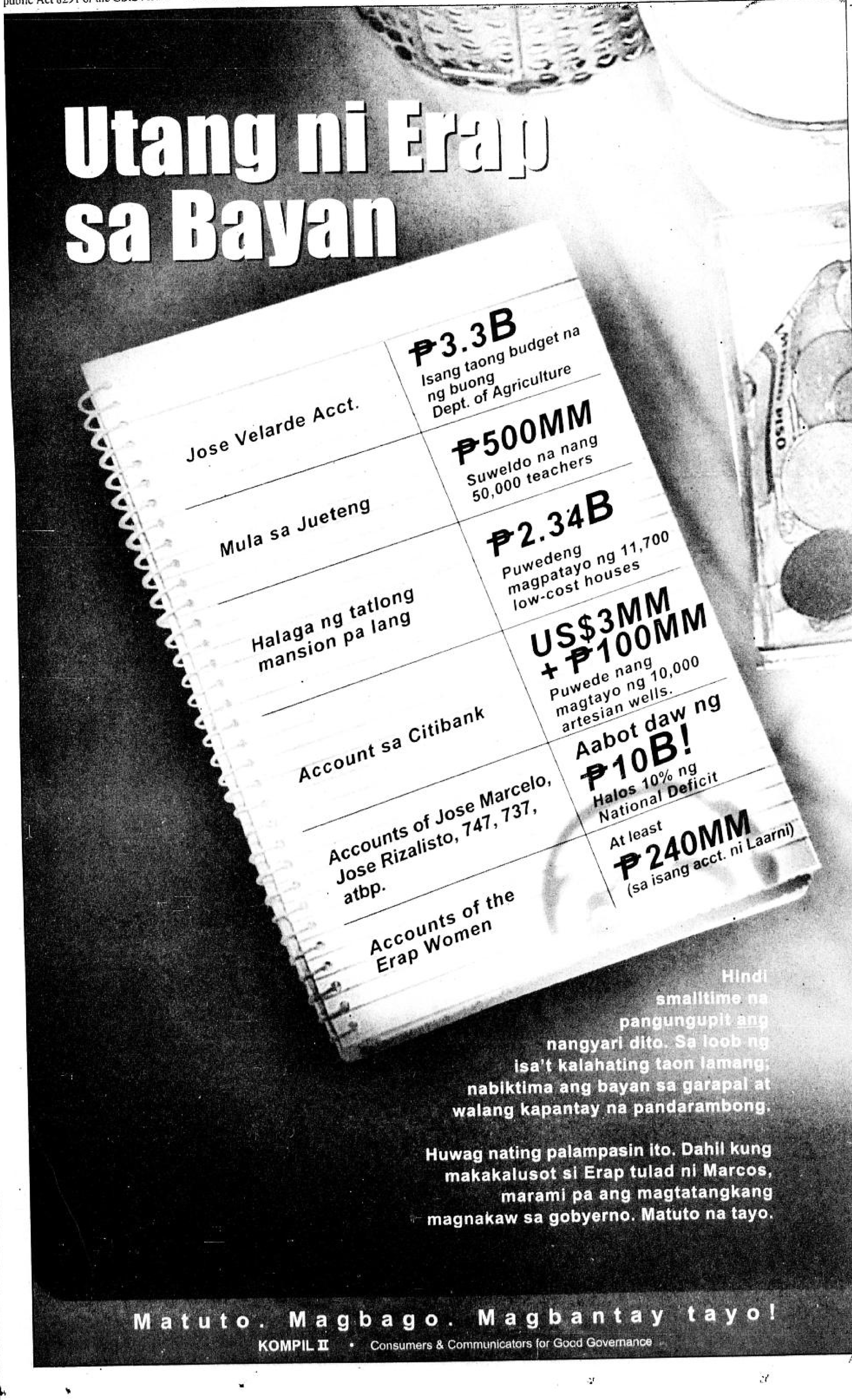
The former governor, who ran for President in the 1998 elections, had announced his plan to run for senator under the Edsa Forces ticket.

Asked how Ms Macapagal will act on the complaint, Sen. Serge Osmeña replied, "I don't know. As a senator and GSIS contributor, I am duty bound to raise this issue."

Malacañang is currently "subjecting all appointments to a continuing review."

Ms Macapagal recalled the appointment of retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser in response to growing criticisms against the President's appointees in her Cabinet.

OSMEÑA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Huwag nating palampasin ito. Dahil kung makakalusot si Erap tulad ni Marcos, marami pa ang magtatangkang magnakaw sa gobyerno. Matuto na tayo.
Matuto. Magbago. Magbantay tayo!
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Vice mayor survives slay attempt

BY VICENTE S. LABRO AND CYNTHIA A. BORGUETA
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Vice Mayor Armando Chan of Lavezares, Northern Samar, is now in critical condition after he was ambushed by two unidentified motorcycle-riding men Tuesday night in the capital town of Catarman.

His companion, Oscar Clutario and driver, Jose Cuyco, however, were not harmed.

Chan suffered four wounds, two in the stomach and one each in the chest and right arm. The suspects waylaid him in Barangay Dalakit. He was brought to the Northern Samar Provincial Hospital (NSPH) for treatment.

He was airlifted to the St. Luke's Hospital in Manila yesterday morning after NSPH doctors advised the family to transfer the vice mayor to a better-equipped hospital.

Supt. Asdali Abah, Northern Samar police provincial office acting director, said shells of .45-caliber bullets were found inside the car of the victim.

The suspects fled after one of them pumped four bullets into the vice mayor.

Abah immediately ordered the police in Catarman and nearby Mondragon and Bobon towns to set up checkpoints in an effort to arrest the suspects. But the suspects eluded the dragnet.

The police were still investigating the possible motives for the ambush.

"It could be politically motivated or an attempt to silence the victim by those who perceived him (to be a) pain in the neck," said lawyer Ramoncito Calubang, Northern Samar provincial legal officer.

Chan, now in his third and last term as vice mayor, is set to run for mayor this May election. Among his opponents is the brother of incumbent Lavezares Mayor Quintin Saludaga.

US, RP troops cleared of war game deaths

BY CONNIE E. FERNANDEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The Toledo City Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the criminal charges filed against the 39 American and Filipino Navy personnel who were blamed for the death of two young boys and the injury of another in August last year.

Toledo City Prosecutor Jacinto Cavada said his office granted on Jan. 29 the motion to dismiss submitted by the complainants who admitted that they had no evidence to prosecute the case in court.

Attached to the motion were the affidavits of desistance executed by the victims' parents stating that they were not interested in pursuing the case because of lack of evidence.

The motion to dismiss and the affidavits of desistance were sent to the prosecutor's office in Toledo, 50 kilometers west of Cebu City, through their legal counsel, Achilles Cañete.

"They were honest enough to admit that they have no case and that the (explosion) was an accident and an act of God," Cavada told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

But an ABS-CBN reporter, Leodacio Navales Inanod, told TV Patrol Cebu that P500,000 was given to each of the family of the victims.

Inanod is a cousin of Pedro Navales, father of Rolly Navales who was one of those killed in the explosion.

It was not clear, however, if the money was in exchange for the signing of the affidavit of desistance by Pedro Navales; Anselmo Gaviola, father of Arnel; and Patricio Villarmea, father of Jordan.

"I could not confirm that," said Cañete when sought for comment.

He maintained that his clients voluntarily executed the affidavits of desistance.

Cousins Arnel, 13 and Rolly, 17, were killed on Aug. 19 when they played with a live M203 grenade they found at an abandoned mining site of the Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. in Barangay Don Andres Soriano, Toledo City. Their cousin, Jordan, 10, was wounded.

The grenade was used during and apparently left behind after the joint RP-US military exercise, dubbed as "Flash Piston," at the abandoned mine site.

Double homicide with physical injuries through negligence were filed against 17 American sailors and 22 Filipino Navy men who participated in the joint exercises.

Cavada said the case was difficult to prove because there was no witness who would testify that it was the sailors who left the grenade inside the ACMDC compound.

"There was no evidence (that will identify) who among the sailors . . . committed negligence," he said. "You cannot charge all (39) sailors." ***With a report from Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Casualties feared in Mayon eruption

LEGAZPI CITY—Disaster officials here expressed fears of possible casualties should Mayon Volcano erupt in the day as hundreds of farmers and orchid pickers keep on trekking to the slopes of the volcano to harvest their crops.

Cedric Daep, provincial disaster management office chief, said farmers continue to harvest crops and tend to their farms inside the six-kilometer permanent danger zone which the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology has declared no man's land.

An aerial survey of the volcano also showed that farmers were still tilling their land around the volcano.

"It's good if Mayon erupts at night because they (the farmers) would likely be at home," said Daep.

Eduardo Ermita, acting defense secretary, was quoted in wire reports as saying although the six-kilometer danger zone has been cleared of people, "some villagers return in the mornings to till their farms and leave before dusk."

Mayor Wilson Andes of Daraga town said orchid collectors keep returning to the slopes of Mayon despite a Phivolcs alert that an eruption may take place soon.

"These people are in real danger and something must be done to avoid loss of lives in case of an eruption," said Fernando Colle, provincial executive secretary.

Dr. Romulo Corpuz, chief of the Phivolcs monitoring division, said alert level No. 3 is still in place.

He said the danger zone might have to be widened to include villages that are at least 7 kilometers away from the volcano.

Ed Laguerta, resident volcanologist, said Mayon had been spewing 3,000 to 5,000 tons of sulfur daily since it became restive again.

Earthquakes were becoming frequent, too, he added.

Mayor Paz Muñoz of Camalig town said her town and the towns of Guinobatan, Ligao, Sto. Domingo, Daraga and this city lack funds to deal with massive evacuation.

Some of the mayors said their calamity funds had been depleted due to Mayon's eruption last year and also because of the typhoons that battered the region.

"While it is true that there are evacuation centers in our town, the facilities are not ready and (were) not even repaired last year," Muñoz said.

Corpuz said more villages are likely to feel the effects of an eruption this time because last year's eruption drastically changed the volcano's topography.

Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Left hits San Fernando cityhood

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—The Bayan Muna party list group and anti-cityhood proponents on Thursday began assembling here for their version of People Power, two days before the Feb. 3 plebiscite that would convert this town into the country's 89th city.

Bayan Muna and the Concerned Citizens of San Fernando kicked off their "three days of sustained protests" Thursday through a town-wide motorcade that began at the provincial capitol grounds.

Protesters, shouting through loud speakers, asked Gov. Manuel Lapid and provincial board members to oppose the conversion of this more than 300-year-old town into a city.

They also urged Lapid to demand an accounting of P5.5 million that Mayor Reynaldo Aquino reportedly spent on the cityhood campaign since 1998.

The motorcade, which gathered about 100 vehicles that bore "NO Muna to Cityhood" posters, was expected to culminate in a rally in front of the municipal hall here, Councilor Millet Ocampo said.

Small entrepreneurs, vendors, drivers, urban poor and members of youth groups would set up pickets and tents in front of the municipal hall.

The protest actions would last until Feb. 3 when some 90,000 San Fernando residents troop to polling precincts to decide on the cityhood bid of the town.

Frank Mangulabnan, Bayan Muna spokesperson in Pampanga, said in a statement that a cityhood status would "not usher in significant change" for San Fernando.

He said the uneven development of Metro Manila cities, where progress had belonged only to a few rich families while the poverty worsened typified the failure of city governments.

Mangulabnan challenged Aquino's claim that San Fernando, once it becomes a city, stands to get more shares in Internal Revenue Allotment.

He said the national government's swelling budget deficit had made it remote for the town to get an estimated P200 million yearly in IRA shares.

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Erap only wants legal immunity–Palace

(From page A1)

dent is that he will use it as defense that he cannot be sued during his term in office."

However, Perez said, Malacañang's position was that Estrada's term was "over."

"He is no longer president and, therefore, he cannot escape responsibility for the cases to be filed against him," Perez said.

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo echoed the view that Estrada's stance was intended to stall the criminal charges against him.

But Arroyo said that based on the House prosecution's evidence, Estrada could be charged with ill-gotten and unexplained wealth, violation of the interlocking laws on graft and corruption, and perjured statement of assets and liabilities.

Kid glove treatment

Militant groups are incensed by Estrada's never-say die stance and want the President to order his arrest.

Satur Ocampo, president of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said that the people had convicted Estrada as a "criminal and plunderer" and that his public appearance on Wednesday was an insult to the "verdict and sovereign will of the people."

Ocampo said Ms Macapagal should not give Estrada "kid glove treatment."

"The people will not allow an arrogant and unrepentant criminal like Estrada to grace the limelight once again and obscure the people's verdict," he said in a statement.

Roberto de Castro, secretary general of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR), said: "Too much drinking has affected Estrada's sanity. It seems he is still intoxicated politically and literally."

But business leaders are hardly bothered.

Philamlife chair Jose L. Cuisia Jr. said that Estrada had lost all credibility and that only a few loyal allies in his party, the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, believed in him.

"I don't think we should give serious thought to his claims because we now have a new government that is adhered to by all sectors of society," Cuisia said.

Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz said Estrada had no more claim to the presidency because he publicly expressed his plan to step down during his last days in Malacañang.

Luz said it was only when Estrada was about to leave the Palace that he insisted he was merely on leave. And this, Luz noted, was because his legal advisers had already coached him.

Realpolitik

Acting Foreign Secretary Lauro Baja Jr. said the international community was ignoring Estrada's insistence that he was still president.

"I don't think the diplomatic corps is paying attention to that one because their governments have expressed support for the new President," Baja said. "All the diplomats here have recognized the President. That's just the reality of international politics."

Baja said all the countries with whom the Philippines had diplomatic relations, as well as international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, had by this time recognized Ms Macapagal and sent congratulatory messages to her.

He said these countries' ambassadors had sought audiences with Ms Macapagal in Malacañang, which the Department of Foreign Affairs was now arranging.

Baja also disclosed that foreign governments, such as that of Malaysia, had invited Ms Macapagal for a state visit.

He said no arrangements had been made as Ms Macapagal had indicated that she did not want to leave the country for the next six months at least.

Traditionally, a newly installed Philippine president first visits other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to emphasize the importance of the regional grouping to the country.

No case

Estrada had declared that he was still the duly elected president and that Ms Macapagal would have to make way for him if and when he decided on a comeback.

"I abandoned Malacañang, but not my post," he had said.

But Perez said Estrada had yet to personally question Ms Macapagal's presidency before the Supreme Court.

He acknowledged that lawyer Oliver Lozano did make such a move, but said it was not clear whether this was done in Estrada's behalf.

"It is significant to note that as of this day, no cases have been filed by the former president. He has not questioned the legality of this government in any court," Perez said.

He said the matter was clear because as far as the Supreme Court was concerned, it was Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. who administered the oath of office to Ms Macapagal.

"We don't have to wait for another decision from the court. If Mr. Estrada would like to question it, then he is free to question it. But so far he has not done so," Perez said.

The justice secretary said Estrada's apparent ploy to gain immunity from suit was not likely to work because Ms Macapagal had given the go-signal for the filing of charges.

"The latest instruction is to go ahead and prosecute those who appear to be guilty of graft and corruption, whoever they may be," Perez said.

Legal statement

Zamora told the INQUIRER that Estrada's speech was "not a threat but a legal statement."

"We know there is already someone seated in Malacañang, and we're not sending out people to drive her away," he said.

He pointed out that the Estrada camp had to raise the issue of legitimacy "because the question now is no longer about the president, but the presidency."

He added: "Is it correct to remove a sitting president without his having resigned?"

Zamora also said Estrada delivered his speech "to end all those speculations that we're out to destabilize the government."

In another phone interview, Jose Victor Ejercito, Estrada's son by ex-starlet Guia Gomez, said the family wanted to clear the ousted leader's name, "so that he won't be judged by history as an evil man, as what was portrayed by our media."

Ejercito said his father wanted a "fair verdict."

"That's why he refused to go on exile amid the criminal charges filed against him," Ejercito said.

He described the charges as "one of the phases of harassment we are being subjected to after that Rich People's Power at Edsa."

Like Zamora, Ejercito said the Club Filipino speech was not a threat to unseat Ms Macapagal.

"My father just wants to assure his millions of supporters that he is not abandoning his people," Ejercito said.

Political will

Bayan Muna secretary general Nathaniel Santiago said the slow pace of prosecuting Estrada had given the disgraced leader time to mount an attempt to regain the presidency.

Santiago said Ms Macapagal should exercise strong political will to "finish Estrada's illusion" to rewrite history in his favor.

"Bayan Muna forces will take to the streets once Estrada launches his bid to kill the spirit of people power and reassume his post," Santiago said.

He added: "The new administration should not purely engage in a word war with the deposed criminal president. The government should prosecute, arrest and detain Estrada in the country's most guarded penal colony."

In the same vein, the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya challenged the Macapagal administration to go for "a giant kill."

Pamalakaya national chair Rodolfo Sambajon said the President should lose no time in prosecuting and arresting Estrada.

"Barely two weeks after Edsa, Estrada has emerged from hiatus and resurfaced to resume his old antics. The President should take this seriously, or Estrada's comeback may catch her flat-footed," Sambajon said.

The PCPR's De Castro said that despite Estrada's threat, he and his supporters had no capacity to wrest political power from the Macapagal administration.

"If ever, people power will throw them out for the second time," De Castro warned.

Still, De Castro said, the people should be vigilant.

He said the combined wealth of Estrada, Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, Lucio Tan and Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. were more than enough to finance destabilizing acts, including a military coup.

Alvin Luque, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Davao City, said Estrada's show of defiance all the more made it necessary for the new administration to speed up his and his cohorts' prosecution and arrest.

Luque said Bayan would mount street protests if Estrada made a move to grab the presidency. *Reports from Armand Nocum, Volt Contreras, Gil Cabacungan Jr., Dona Pazzibugan, Andrea Trinidad-Echavez, Gerald G. Lacuarta and Martin P. Marfil in Manila; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Jimenez placed on BID watch list again

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE BUREAU of Immigration has one again placed controversial businessman Mark Jimenez in its watch list, after the 90-day watch order issued by former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez expired yesterday.

Newly installed Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said she extended Jimenez's inclusion in the watch list upon the orders of the Department of Justice.

Jimenez was first placed in the watch list for 90 days on Oct. 31 last year.

Domingo said even if Jimenez was on the watch list, the fugitive from US justice could freely leave the country but only after he had sought and acquired permission from the DOJ.

Jimenez also has to inform the DOJ and the BI of his address abroad and the date of his expected return.

Jimenez, who is being sought by the US government extradition on charges of tax evasion, mail fraud and illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party, has agreed to testify against ousted President Joseph Estrada.

DOJ filing more cases of plunder vs Estrada

(From page A1)

ture order. If I announce it now before charges are filed, we will not be able to file them anymore," he said.

Perez said President Macapagal-Arroyo had instructed him to "go ahead and prosecute those who appear to be guilty of graft and corruption whoever they may be."

He said the DOJ had the discretion of not filing a case against those who would testify against the former President before the Ombudsman.

But the justice department cannot grant immunity to the witnesses if charges had been filed against them, according to Perez.

Three witnesses

Perez also told reporters in Malacañang that the DOJ was screening three people as possible witnesses against Estrada.

One of them is Charlie "Atong" Ang, a gambling buddy of Estrada whose disagreement with Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson over Bingo 2-Ball triggered the "Juetengate" scandal that led to the impeachment and ouster of Estrada.

But Perez said several persons had sent word that Ang would not qualify as state witness because he was not the "least guilty" among the parties in the jueteng controversy.

Perez would not name the two other witnesses being screened by the DOJ.

But he earlier admitted that businessman Mark Jimenez, a member of the inner circle of Estrada, would testify against the former President. Jimenez is now under the Witness Protection Program of the DOJ.

Edward Serapio, Estrada's personal lawyer, and Rowena "Weng" Lopez, one of the mistresses of Estrada, have also expressed willingness to cooperate with government prosecutors.

Jimenez

Stung by criticisms that Jimenez was a "Johnny come lately," his lawyer yesterday said that Jimenez was ready to testify against President Estrada in the Senate impeachment trial before Estrada was ousted.

"In the second week of January, someone contacted me on his behalf and asked if I were able to act as Jimenez's counsel because he decided to turn prosecution witness," Mario Bautista said in a statement.

"However, Edsa II events overtook the proceedings," said Bautista, the private prosecutor who conducted the direct examination of Clarissa G. Ocampo, senior vice president of Equitable PCI Bank, in the impeachment trial.

It was Ocampo who testified that Estrada owned the Jose Velarde account with the Equitable PCI Bank. The prosecution said the Velarde account had a total deposit of P3.2 billion.

House Majority Leader Sergio Apostol, a prosecutor in the impeachment trial, confirmed that the House prosecution panel had discussions with Jimenez, a member of Estrada's inner circle, during the trial and that the businessman had provided valuable inputs for the prosecutors.

"We were on the verge of concluding an agreement for him to testify in open court when circumstances prevented us from completing the arrangements. We had reached a preliminary understanding for him to reveal what he knew about the extent of Mr. Estrada's shady financial dealings," Apostol said.

Before Jimenez could be presented as a witness, the trial was terminated.

Commissions

Apostol earlier said that Jimenez should only be taken in as a witness if he could provide a direct link to illegal acts committed by Estrada like accepting commissions from corporate takeovers and mergers.

The House majority leader cited the P32-billion merger of Equitable Bank and the PCI Bank in which Estrada allegedly received a hefty commission.

Jimenez also brokered the P30-billion takeover of PLDT by First Pacific. Estrada also reportedly received a commission from the deal.

Apostol urged the government to delay the extradition of Jimenez to the United States to allow him to testify against Estrada.

The US government is seeking the extradition of Jimenez on charges of illegal campaign contribution to the Democratic Party and of mail and tax fraud.

"Jimenez's testimony will not only corroborate what the witnesses told the Senate impeachment court. It will also reveal more details and tie up the many loose ends of the real story behind the corruption and excesses of Estrada and his cohorts," Apostol said in a press statement.

"If taken now, (his testimony) will expose in full the extent of presidential misdeeds and help shape the cases now being readied for filing against former President Estrada," he said.

Batangas Rep. Ralph Recto urged President Macapagal to "resist all pressures to have Jimenez immediately extradited.

"Jimenez is charged with pick-pocketing abroad when he can be a critical witness here to send economic saboteurs and plunderers to jail," Recto said in a statement.

Recto pointed out that Jimenez was not a murderer and "deserves the same sympathy and patriotic protection that we gave the likes of Sarah Balabagan."

Balabagan was meted out the death penalty in the United Arab Emirates for killing her employer who tried to rape her. But appeals from the Philippine government and other groups for clemency saved Balabagan.

Recto accused the Partido ng Masang Pilipino of orchestrating the scheme to have Jimenez banished to remove a thorn from Estrada.

Superfluous

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo described the offers of Estrada's former cronies to testify against the former President as "superfluous."

Arroyo said the offers were made so that the cronies would not be charged.

"They too want to buy their defense so that they cannot be criminally charged. They have the same mind-set as the former President," Arroyo said in a statement.

Faith in the DOJ

Sen. Raul Roco told skeptics to have faith in the ability of the Department of Justice to prosecute Estrada's case "with vigor."

Roco's statement followed Sen. Franklin Drilon's warning to the DOJ against "planted" witnesses who could sabotage efforts to prosecute Estrada.

Roco, the new education secretary, said that in the many cases that he handled while in private practice, Hernando Perez, now the justice secretary, was often defending the other side.

"I know his capacity. He is very careful and he is very thorough. He is a good lawyer," he said.

Roco said Perez "can spot fake witnesses" to ensure that nobody would be accepted into the witness protection program who would jeopardize the prosecution's case.

Roco said there was no question that the crimes of Estrada "must be prosecuted" by the Macapagal administration.

"It is a commitment to the people," he said. "We will never improve until we are able to demonstrate that the rule of law is valid," Roco added. *With a report from Amy Bainbridge*

Spare me . . .

(From page A1)

changed his mind. He is instead seeking immunity from suit in connection with the P130-million tobacco tax kickback he allegedly gave Estrada.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto yesterday said a special panel was now studying whether the prosecution star witness in Estrada's impeachment trial should be granted immunity.

"First, the panel will determine if he is not the most guilty. Second, if his testimony is an absolute necessity for the successful prosecution of the charges. Third, if there is no other direct evidence for proper prosecution. Fourth, if his testimony can be corroborated by other evidence," Desierto said.

Singson is facing charges of graft, malversation, and falsification of public documents in the Office of the Ombudsman in connection with the missing P130 million representing the Ilocos Sur provincial government's share of tobacco excise taxes.

In a six-page motion, however, Singson contended that he was entitled to immunity from suit "by operation of law" after he testified against Estrada in the Senate trial.

He cited Presidential Decree No. 749 that exempted from prosecution or punishment anyone who volunteers information about any violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Law, Internal Revenue Code, and Tariff and Customs Code.

"In his testimony, the respondent (Singson) accused Estrada of graft and other violations of the Revised Penal Code in connection with the diversion of P130 million of the tobacco excise taxes for Ilocos Sur," his lawyer-cousin Manuel Singson told the Ombudsman.

Singson's lawyer also pointed out that his client should be granted immunity from suit as "he has not been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude."

The NBI and an Estrada supporter filed charges against Singson after the governor admitted before Senate investigators that he personally withdrew the P130 million from the provincial coffers and gave the money to Estrada.

Consolidate cases

Instead of answering the charges, Singson asked Desierto to consolidate the cases lodged against him and four other cases of plunder filed against Estrada, former first lady Dr. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, and Charlie "Atong" Ang.

Anti-Estrada nongovernment organizations and legal groups filed the four cases of plunder.

Singson said the four "are principals by direct participation and, with respect to Estrada and Ang, they are also principals by induction and indispensable cooperation."

In his testimony at the Senate trial, Singson said he gave the P130 million to Ang who, in turn, handed over the money to Estrada at his Polk Street residence in Greenhills, San Juan.

According to Singson, he learned later that P70 million went to Estrada, P20 million to his wife, P15 million to their son Jinggoy.

Ang pocketed P20 million, Singson said.

All four have denied Singson's allegations.

Nonetheless, Singson said Desierto should pursue the cases against the four instead of asking the Department of Justice to dismiss the charges against them.

"Thus, pursuant to the provisions of the 1987 Constitution that every person is entitled to the equal protection of the law, respondent cannot be prosecuted without the inclusion of the aforementioned principals," Singson added.

The Department of Justice and private prosecutors are planning to press charges of plunder against Estrada, claiming the ousted President amassed about P10-P15 billion in ill-gotten wealth during his 30-month stay in office.

If convicted, Estrada faces the death penalty—a prospect Singson apparently has no plan to share with his ex-buddy.

After the Edsa People Power II ousted Estrada and swept Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency, Singson announced that he was retiring for good—not only from the hassles of political life but from courtroom battles as well.

Ping pooh-poohs plum posts

(From page A1)

troversial general was offered a carrot by the Macapagal camp.

"As early as 1998, I was already being considered to be the running mate of President (Macapagal-) Arroyo for the 2004 elections."

Lacson had also been invited to join the senatorial tickets of other political parties like the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) and Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

So far, Lacson has held out.

"Secretary De Villa showed me a short list of countries and companies, but I didn't even look at them," Lacson said. "He said it has been traditional in the service that when you exit, there should be a certain amount of dignity."

Lacson considered the offers as *"consuelo de bobo"* after withdrawing his support from Estrada.

Besides, he didn't believe he would be an effective ambassador.

"In the first place, I don't even drink," Lacson said. "You have to attend a lot of socials if you are an ambassador.

"I told De Villa, 'Sir, you were also from the service. If you were offered a position, you want to be effective in it and you want to be able to help a lot of people. If you ask about dignity, this is dignity enough for me,'" Lacson said clutching his letter of resignation.

Lacson asked De Villa to convey his message to Ms Macapagal.

"I told him, 'I have here my courtesy resignation. Please give it to her and tell her thank you very much, but I'm declining the offer.' I never really got to talk to her."

Lacson recalled he received a call from De Villa that Ms Macapagal wanted to talk to him hours after Estrada resigned on Jan. 20. Lacson was made to go to the Linden Suites in Ortigas Center, where Macapagal stayed after she took her oath of office.

"He (De Villa) said President GMA would like to convey an important message to me, not an instruction but only a message," Lacson said. "Although I heard earlier that I would be retained along with Angie Reyes (AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes), I already announced that I would tender my courtesy resignation first thing after she assumed power. In fact, I was carrying my letter when I went there."

Matillano drunk

Lacson denied an earlier report that he was nearly beaten up by former Constabulary Col. Billy Bibit and Senior Supt. Eduardo Matillano at the Linden Suites.

"Bibit was just arriving when we were already inside the car (ready to leave)," Lacson recalled. "It was (Roberto) Lastimoso, (Rodolfo) Garcia and (Eduardo) Matillano who were there."

Lacson said Matillano extended his hand to him when they were inside the elevator.

"He was obviously drunk because he was red and he said, *'Bakit palagi mo akong iniiwasan?* (Why are you always avoiding me?)' I told him I didn't see him."

Lacson said Matillano wanted to talk to him, but he refused because it was already late.

"So I motioned to my security that we should go down instead. I still had backup at that time and they were armed. Then I heard Matillano hurling invectives at me. But I really didn't want to stoop to his level because I know he was drunk."

Threats from Berroya

Lacson confirmed he had been getting more death threats now that he is out of the police force. He singled out Col. Reynaldo Berroya, who has been threatening to get back at him.

"He (Berroya) has been very vocal about it, especially when he's drunk, that he would get back at me, because I sent him to jail," Lacson said.

"You have to take every threat seriously. You cannot afford to take these things for granted," Lacson added.

Lacson admitted he never realized the power of his position as PNP chief until now.

"I am now an outsider looking in and back then, I didn't feel that the position was very powerful," he said. "Now, I think so much has gone in terms of influence and power."

The 1971 Philippine Military Academy graduate was reportedly drafted for the senatorial slate of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino for the May elections. Lacson refused to say categorically if he is running in the May 14 elections.

"That's a complicated decision for me because you have to be ready with a party and logistics," Lacson said.

Crossroads

"I am at the crossroads of my life," Lacson said. "It came sooner than I expected. I was thinking I would be in this kind of dilemma in November 2003 yet. But there are sign posts now that I have to choose from."

Asked if he would allow Estrada to bankroll his campaign, Lacson remarked, "If he (Estrada) supports you financially, it's going to be an issue whether it's correct or not, because the public would have the perception that the campaign money is ill-gotten."

Lacson bragged about his 93-percent awareness, based on surveys done by Pulse Asia and the Social Weather Stations.

Lacson enjoyed an awareness level of 93 percent with a net approval rating (NAR) of plus 64 in the Pulse Asia Survey. It said he had "senatoriable" ratings. But that was last July.

By December, his NAR had plunged from plus 64 to plus 28, though his awareness level remains high at 91 percent.

Retirement

Lacson recently filed for optional retirement from the PNP, although it has yet to be approved by newly elected chief Leandro Mendoza.

"I don't want to deny General Mendoza his fourth star," Lacson said. "It happened to me when I was appointed PNP chief and (Santiago) Aliño was still there. He didn't want to retire because he wanted to get the full retirement benefit."

Lacson explained there's a big difference in separation pay when an officer retires prematurely.

"In my case, I'm supposed to receive P4-5 million if I retire in November 2003 because in my tenure, I was appointed in November 1999," he said. "I can afford not to retire and get my four stars, but there's only one slot.

"I will not be a hindrance (to Mendoza). He will get his four stars. So instead of me hearing him say, *'Ayaw pang lumayas nitong gago na 'to,'* I am willing to sacrifice the differential in pay."

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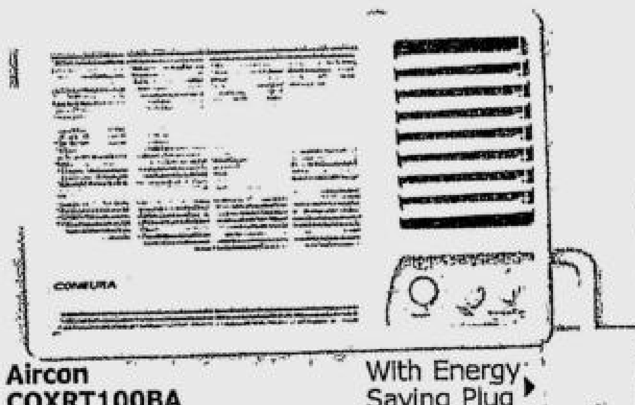

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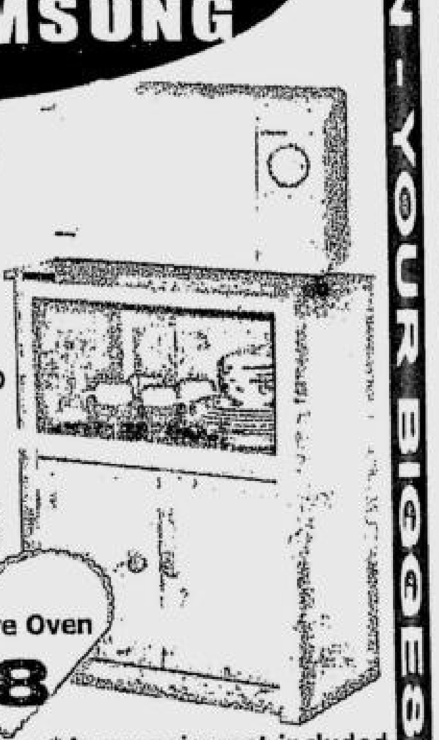

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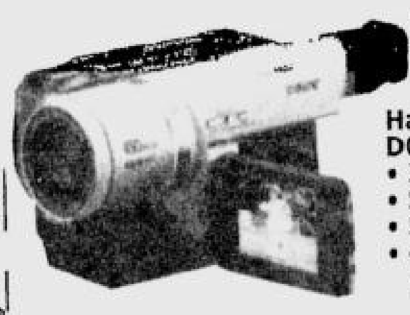

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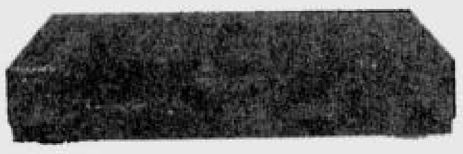

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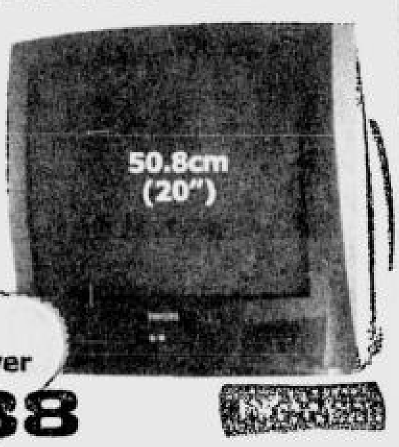

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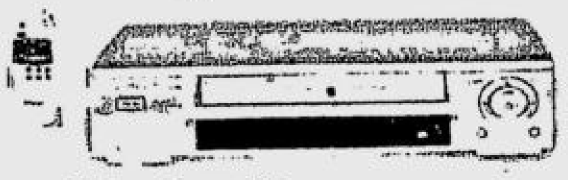

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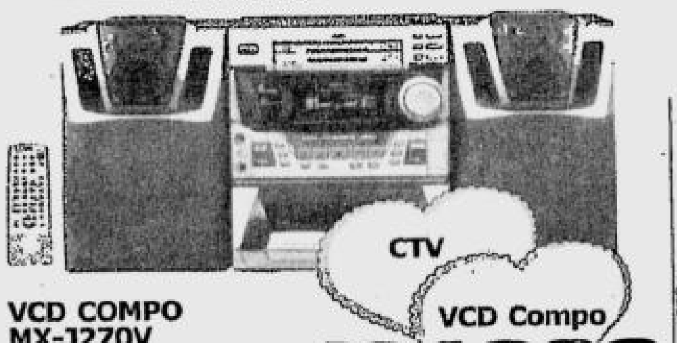

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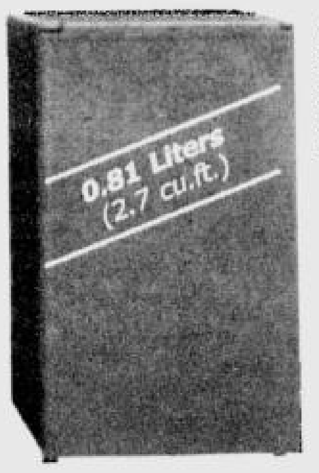

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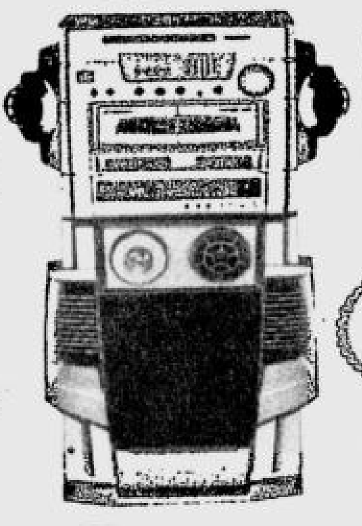

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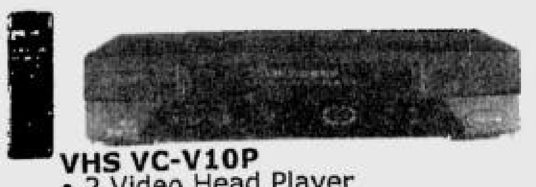

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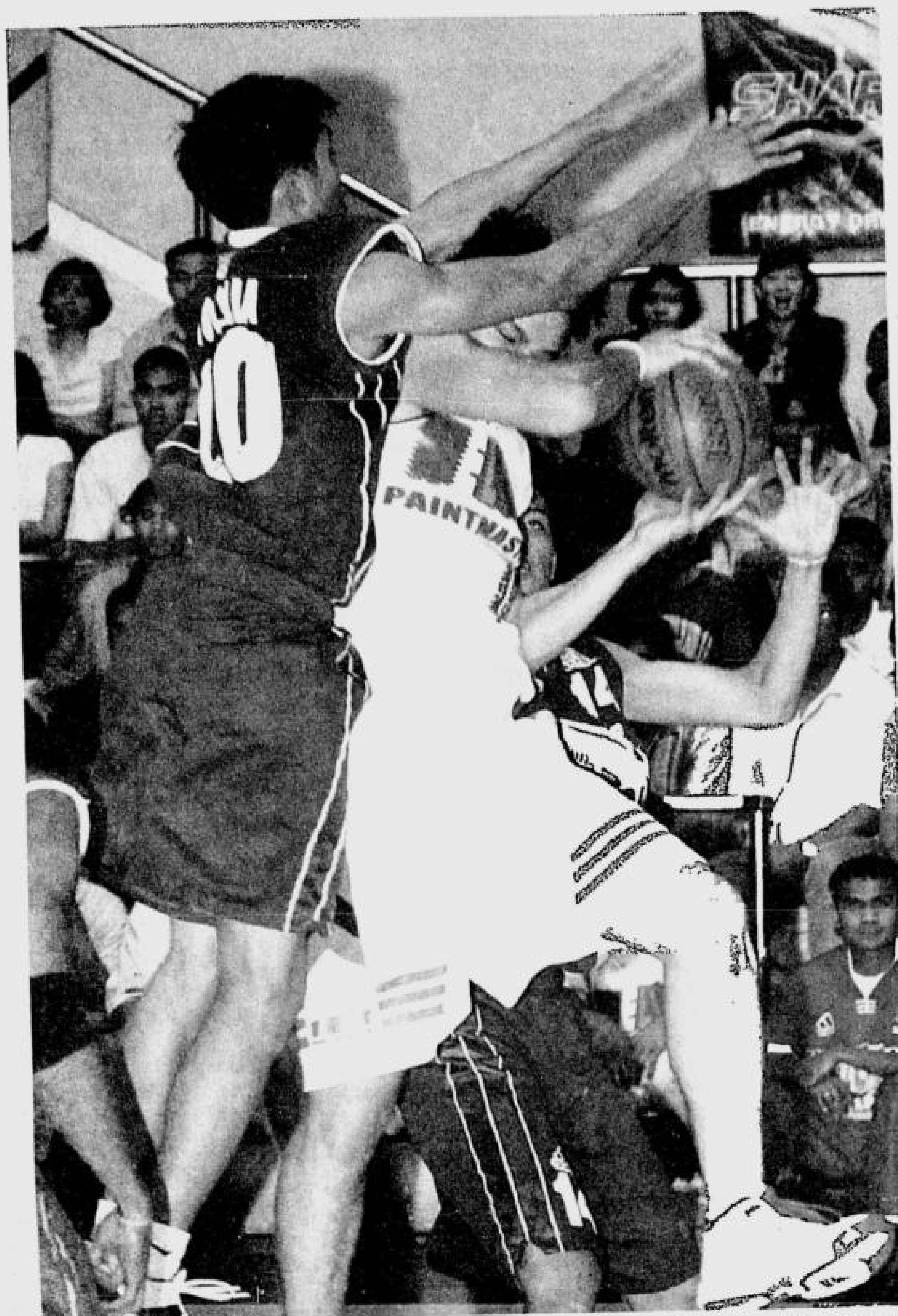

RYAN Pamintuan of Welcoat Paints beats Shark's Chester Tolomia (left) and Ryzal Castro (right) for the rebound. Welcoat won, 72-59.
JOAN BONDOC

GAMES TOMORROW *(Makati Coliseum)*
2 p.m.—Blu Sun Power vs Montaña (3rd place)
4 p.m.—Shark vs Welcoat (championship)

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE GHOST of the Chairman's Cup continues to haunt Shark Energy Drink.

Last night, the same old, agonizing story was retold as Welcoat Paints opened its bid for a fourth straight title with an overpowering 72-59 victory over Shark in the PBL Challenge Cup best-of-seven title series at the Makati Coliseum.

Welcoat swept Shark, 4-0, in the Chairman's Cup and with the way it won in Game One, the doubters were convinced that another sweep is in the making.

"Our hearts are missing," rued Shark coach mentor Leo Austria in their dugout. He can find little consolation, though, as the Energy Drink Kings shouted in unison that they will come back in the next game.

Team owner Raul Panlilio was also straightforward. "We should not be here if we'll not change our performance."

The win preserved Welcoat's sterling mark in the series. It was the Paintmasters 11th straight win, counting also their back-to-back Challenge Cup victories last year.

"I didn't expect to win this easily. If we win Game Two, I can smell a sweep. But then I expect Shark to come back," Baculi said at the packed pressroom.

The Paintmasters jumped the gun on the bewildered Energy Drink Kings

Gunner Ren Ren Ritualo, Jojo Manalo and Eugene Tan preserved Anton Villoria's first quarter explosion as Welcoat posted several 19-point leads, the last at 66-47, three minutes left.

An added spectacle was Yancy de Ocampo's memorable show. He went 4-of-4 in the three-point area, finishing with 18 points and 10 rebounds.

Roger Yap and Chester Tolomia failed to deliver, while Ryzal Castro and Irvin Sotto struggled in the shaded lane. Yap made poor shots, while Tolomia played with heavy legs all throughout, leaving a void in Shark's offensive rotation.

Earlier, Montaña leaned on the excellent shows of Aris Dimaunahan, Gilbert Lao and Jacques Gottenbos to trip Blu, 70-59, and move to within a victory of getting third place.

Scores:

MONTAÑA 70—Gottenbos 19, Lao 18, Dimaunahan 14, Latoreno 11, David 3, Mesina 2, Torrente 2, Castaneda 1, Saniel 0.

BLU 59—Dela Cuesta 15, Billiones 9, Canoza 8, Sanz 7, Legaspi 6, Calo 6, Bacani 3, Kalaw 3, David 0, Bona 0.

Quarterscores: 22-18, 37-41, 61-50, 70-59.

(Second Game)

WELCOAT 72—De Ocampo 18, Villoria 12, Ritualo 11, Manalo 8, Tan 8, Cruz 5, Patrimonio 4, Pamintuan 4, Canlas 2, Sison 0.

SHARK 59—Yap 15, Castro 14, Robinson 9, Tolomia 7, Ortega 4, Velez 3, Malabanan 2, Ybanez 2, Rodriguez 2, Sotto 1, Echavez 0.

Quarterscores: 19-13, 35-30, 52-40, 72-59.

Paeng's pa appeal to GMA

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

BECAUSE he felt it was useless to bring his case to members of Congress, because many of our politicians lied so much that they scarcely knew what the truth was, Angel Nepomuceno, father-coach of bowling legend Paeng Nepomuceno, is calling on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo not to sign the athletes and coaches' incentives bill—if it has already passed Congress.

Saying he agreed with what I have written recently, the elder Nepomuceno said the bill is highly discriminatory and, which unless amended, does not recognize non-Olympic sports like bowling, billiards and golf where Filipino champions have placed the sports like bowling, billiards and golf in the international sports map.

The elder Nepomuceno bitterly assailed lawmakers such as Sen. Robert Jaworski and Rep. Ranjit Shahani for being "totally misinformed or simply ignorant" of the achievements of the last two PSA (Philippine Sportswriters Association) Athletes of the Year golfer Dorothy Delasin and billiard world champ Efren "Bata" Reyes and four-time World Cup winner Paeng Nepomuceno, a five-time PSA awardee.

''It is also hypocritical of them to first honor Paeng with resolutions (from both the House and Senate) for his World Cup achievements and for receiving the IOC (International Olympic Committee) President's Award and then to completely ignore these unprecedented accomplishments in their incentives bill," said the disheartened father-coach.

Continuing, the elder Nepomuceno said, "It is also stupid to say that athletes like Paeng, just because he has already received countless honors, should not be honored further through this incentives bill." The father-coach asked, "What kind of mentality is that?" It is even senseless to say that the cash prizes Paeng earned through the years should be enough. Angel Nepomuceno said the money Paeng won in his three decades of international competitions is less than what our top basketball players have been receiving in a single year in local tournaments. This, despite the fact that Paeng is not a local player but a world champion!

"The bill is certainly defective and has to be amended," stressed Angel Nepomuceno. "All we want is equality, not discrimination."

* * *

SPORTS TRIVIA. In 1971, Rene Reyes became the first player from the Philippines to win a medal in the prestigious Bowling World Cup. Reyes captured the bronze in the seventh edition of the international kegfest held at Hong Kong's Four Seas Bowling Center. Roger Dalkin, a student at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, beat Mexico's Benny Corona in the three-game finals, 542-524. Years later, Dalkin was elected executive director in the world's largest and most influential bowling group, the American Bowling Congress. In 1972 in Hamburg, Germany, Filipino police officer Loreto Maranan won the silver medal, losing to Canadian Ray Mitchell, a 40-year-old telephone executive from Toronto, 550-532. Maranan's feat signaled the emergence of Filipino players as a force to reckon with in the international bowling scene. Women's bowling also made its debut in Hamburg, with Irma Urrea of Mexico thrashing Thailand's Oy Sri-Saard in the three-game finals, 591-537.

* * *

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PSC files charges vs ex-commissioner

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission yesterday filed administrative and criminal charges against former commissioner Teresita Abundo before the office of the Ombudsman after she allegedly hired a consultant without the blessing of PSC chair Carlos Tuason.

Executive Director Juan Cuadrado, in behalf of the PSC, filed the case two weeks after Tuason, commissioner Richie Garcia and former commissioners Leonardo Celles and Monico Puentevella were exonerated from the complaint lodged by Abundo last year.

The PSC accused Abundo of illegally hiring the services of Agnes Cruz as consultant for the Philippine Sports Talent Identification Program (PSTIP) without the approval of Tuason.

Cruz, a former Senior Sports and Games Regulation officer before Abundo appointed her as consultant, has an outstanding balance of P798,000 with the PSC prior to her appointment and an unliquidated consultant's wage of P50,000, all unaccounted for up to this day.

In a telephone interview, Abundo denied the accusations and revealed that Cuadrado called her up to admit that Tuason allegedly forced him to sign the documentation of the case.

'Thunderbird' prevails

CROWD favorites Thunderbird Firefly IV and Thunderbird Firefly III finished 1-2 late Wednesday night to rule the well-attended NCA (National Cockers Association) 7-Cock Derby at he Araneta Coliseum.

Entered by Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Thunderbird Firefly IV emerged solo champion by posting 6-1/2 points in this third of 15 year-long seven-cock derbies. Finishing solo at second place with 6 points was Thunderbird Firefly III of the Firefly Group.

Sharing third with 5 points each were Thunderbird Firefly 8 of the Firefly Group, MSK Binangonan of Ito Ynares and Manny Kho, San Pablo Heat of Blandy Tolentino, Capitan III of upcoming Alan Tan and Patrick Puno, PBRJ Binangonan of Ito Ynares and Boyboy Roa and Mulawin Argem Coliseum III of engineer Pacifico Berin and Rudy Albano.

New-look Pop debuts vs Red Bull

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Shell	x	x
Pop Cola	x	x
Red Bull	x	x

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m. – Mobiline vs Shell
7:30 p.m. – Pop Cola vs Red Bull

By Marc Anthony Reyes

YOU MAY not be able to recognize Pop Cola this season.

Pop Cola manager Elmer Yanga yesterday issued that statement, referring to the Panthers' massive pre-season overhaul where they took in a total of nine new players.

Well, that depends on how a refurbished Pop Cola carry itself against equally fortified Batang Red Bull today in the PBA All Filipino Cup at Philsports.

Mobiline and Shell Velocity also make their debut, facing each other in the first game at 5:15 p.m.

Yanga said the infusion of players like Johnny Abarrientos, Rudy Hatfield and Poch Juinio is designed to yield "immediate results" from the franchise that last tasted a title six years ago.

"We are not in the build-up process anymore," said Yanga. "We want results, because it's been a long time since we get into the finals."

In 1995, the Panthers won the first two conferences but missed the grand slam by failing to make the finals. From then on, they drifted along and finished among the worst teams in the league.

So it's going to be tough task for Pop Cola despite the presence of new back court main man Abarrientos, who himself is facing a crossroad in his career.

"What happened hurt me, of course," said Aburrientos of the trade that shifted him from Alaska Milk. "But I'm in a new team now and I want to prove myself once again with Pop Cola."

His counterpart in Red Bull's camp is a jolly, overall first-round pick in Willie Miller, whose partnership with comebacking Kerby Raymundo only makes the Thunder all the more fearsome.

Because even without the last Governors Cup, the Thunder made the semifinals though Devonn Harp, Mick Pennisi and Jimwell Torion.

"I admit that we look good on paper but seeing us in the hardcourt is a different thing," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao. "We improved our lineup as well as the other teams."

He knows that no team has a better lineup on paper than the Panthers who will have mainstays Jojo Lastimosa, Nelson Asaytono and Will Antonio aside from Pido Jarencio and rookies Ato Morano and Jovy Sese.

"Maybe this year we can be among the stronger teams," said Yanga.

The Phone Pals and the Zoom Masters have very modest improvements.

Mobiline, though badly needing a backup center, got guards and swingmen in the draft, choosing Gilbert Demape, June Longalong and Norman Gonzales.

Shell, on the other hand, is flashing the overall No. 2 pick in Michael Hrabak aside from new acquisitions Rob Wainwright and Jojo Lim.

Shaq-less LA lose

MINNEAPOLIS—Taking advantage of Shaquille O'Neal's absence, Kevin Garnett scored 21 points as Minnesota earned its franchise-record eighth straight victory by beating the Los Angeles Lakers 96-83 in the NBA Wednesday night.

The Lakers lost the second of three games without O'Neal, who is sidelined with a foot injury. Los Angeles dropped its 16th game of the season, surpassing last season's loss total.

Meanwhile, Vince Carter's reinjured knee might force him to miss the NBA's All-Star game.

The Toronto Raptors' forward, the leading All-Star vote-getter for the second straight year, was to undergo tests on his left knee Wednesday.

In Philadelphia, 76ers star Allen Iverson said he shouted a derogatory remark at an Indiana fan in reaction to racial taunting.

NBC taped Iverson's exchange with the fan near the end of the 76ers' 86-81 victory in Indianapolis on Sunday. The remark was a derogatory term for gays.

Iverson said he was called a "monkey" and another racial slur.

In Oregon, Detlef Schrempf made it through his first practice since being coaxed out of retirement, but he didn't sound ready or able to play in an NBA game right away. *AP*

Complete results: Boston 102, Indiana 96, OT; Orlando 100, Washington 96; Atlanta 102, Toronto 97; Detroit 112, New Jersey 103; Milwaukee 116, Denver 111; Minnesota 96, L.A. Lakers 83; San Antonio 92, L.A. Clippers 70; Phoenix 101, Vancouver 92. *AP*

Hingis, Kournikova advance to q'finals

TOKYO—Top-seeded Martina Hingis of Switzerland easily advanced to the quarterfinals Wednesday, making a good start in her bid for an unprecedented third straight Toray Pan Pacific Open crown.

The world's top-ranked player, coming from her defeat in the final of the Australian Open to American Jennifer Capriati last week, took only 54 minutes en route to a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Cara Black of Zimbabwe.

In the other second-round match of the day, third seed Anna Kournikova of Russia struggled to a 7-6 (8), 1-6, 6-4 win over Japanese qualifier Saori Obata.

Two other big names with first-round byes—second seed Lindsay Davenport of the United States and fourth-seeded South African Amanda Coetzer—were idle in the singles event.

Hingis quickly built a 4-0 lead before her 40th-ranked opponent came back with some good serves and sharp shots down the line to win three consecutive games.

But the 20-year-old Swiss star had little trouble getting back into rhythm, playing serve-and-volley in the eighth game and then taking advantage of her opponent's two double-faults to break the ninth.

In the second set, Hingis broke the second game and was in control throughout.

Hingis is seeking a third straight Toray title and fourth overall. She first won it in 1997, and in between Davenport triumphed in 1998.

Against the world's ninth-ranked Kournikova, No. 155 Obata was more resilient than her opponent until she ran out of energy on her serve at 4-3 in the final set.

The 19-year-old Russian broke the game and then streaked through the remaining ones.

About her singles title drought on the WTA Tour, she said: "The people forget that I'm 19 years old, and you know that Capriati won her first Grand Slam title at the age of 24."

In the day's first-round action, Iva Majoli of Coatia, the 1996 Toray champion but a wild card entrant this time, ousted Australian Nicole Pratt 6-4, 6-0.

Meanwhile, wild-card entrant Shinobu Asagoe of Japan upset fourth seed Amanda Coetzer of France 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (5) on Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals.

'In an upset-filled second round, Majoli, ousted seventh seed Lisa Raymond of the United States 6-7 (3), 6-2, 7-6 (1).

Also, unseeded Ai Sugiyama of Japan defeated fifth seed Sandrine Testud of France 6-4, 6-4, while Anne-Gaelle Sidot of France eliminated sixth-seeded Russian player Elena Likhovtseva 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (2). *AP*

HINGIS: Easy win
AP

RP hosting D. Cup elims

THE PHILIPPINES will play host to the eight-nation qualifying round of the Asia-Oceania Zone Davis Cup Group 3 competition starting Feb. 7 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center in Vito Cruz, Manila.

The RP team will be bannered by the Philippine Tennis Association (Philta) top-ranked singles player Johnny Arcilla along with Adelo Abadia and Rolando Ruel, Jr. The three also competed in last year's Davis Cup.

Newest members of the squad are Michael Mora III and Joseph Victorino and team captain Davis Cup veteran and former No. 1 player, Joseph Lizardo.

Group III is divided into two groups. With the Philippines in Group A are Singapore, Bahrain and Sri Lanka. Group B is composed of Kazakhstan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan.

The Philippines will clash with Singapore on Feb. 7, Bahrain on Feb. 8 and Sri Lanka, Feb. 9.

The top two teams in both groups will advance to the crossover semifinals on Feb. 10. The winners fight for the championship on Feb. 11.

Dondi tops drag racing

DONDI Montecillo led 11 other winners in the recent ProSpeed Quarter Mile 2000 championship drag racing series at the Manila Harbour Center.

Other winners were Adelbert Ayroso, Michael dela Cruz, John Dionisio, Boboy Rabe, Toby Sta. Cruz, Rhamier Chavez, Dustin Yu, Dexter Laxamana, Mark Chan, Jeffrey Cristobal and Jay Cortez.

The event was organized by Prospeed president Butch Inducil, race director Arnold Cortez, deputy race director Nestor Santiaguel and operations head Rey Academia.

Fishing tilt set

THE PGFF-SBYC Interclub Sportfishing Tournament reels off Saturday ending Sunday, with Subic Bay Yacht Club as host. It's supported by Triple-V president Vic-Vic Villavicencio, Philippine Game Fishing Foundation president Rey Buencamino said yesterday. The event is held simultaneously with the 4th SFFP National Fishing Championship.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Flirt 2. Maharani 3. Always 4. Best of All

Race 2—1. Hot Lips 2. Gifted Galloper 3. Ladies Night 4. Something Silver

Race 3—1. Sham Sham 2. Maria Nevada 3. Glory Be 4. Legitimo

Race 4—1. My Indy 2. Running Indy 3. Palachik

Race 5—1. Slew's Ecstasy 2. Give and Take 3. Kaboom 4. Free Bee

Race 6—1. Perfect Gift 2. Lady Darinda 3. Ace of Space

Race 7—1. Adrenalin 2. Kitana 3. Soloist 4. Lyonnais

Race 8—1. Three of Heart 2. Hunting Treasure/Fiesta 3. Aringkingking

Race 9—1. Turbo Carera 2. Steel Wheel 3. Above All 4. Go Johnny Go

Hakeem mulls Miami stint

HOUSTON—Houston Rockets center Hakeem Olajuwon has said all he's going to say about joining the Miami Heat. "The last couple of weeks, the talk has died down and I want to keep it that way," the 38-year-old Nigerian said following practice Wednesday. Olajuwon told the South Florida Sun-Sentinel before Tuesday night's game against the Heat that he wanted to make better use of his skills this season under a coach like Pat Riley. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Air Force battles Aguinaldo

PHILIPPINE Air Force battles Emilio Aguinaldo College at 4 p.m. today at the start of the 2000 National Basketball Conference-Spring Oil Cup at the San Juan Knights Gym. In the main game, Spring Cooking Oil tests the mettle of multititled Wang's Athletic Club at 5:30 p.m. Eight teams are entered in the tournament organized by NBC chair Ted Magno.

MRT-SOUTHWOODS OPEN

Pagunsan vaults to 4-shot lead

BY JONG ARCANO

JAPAN Tour-bound Rey Pagunsan, finally breaking the 30-stroke barrier for one nine, turned the course upside down with a bogey-free eight-under-par 64 and scampered home to a four-stroke lead in the opening round of the MRT-Southwoods open golf championship.

Making hay from the blue tees, the 32-year-old Pagunsan birdied four of his first five holes and collected seven in the front nine for a spectacular 29 as he led a no-holds-barred assault of the defenseless Masters course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

There were no winds to make club selection difficulty, just the humidity that failed to stop 14 players out of the 64 starters from cracking par.

Tournament-favorite Cassius Casas settled for a 68 after hooking his drive into the water on the 12th for a double-bogey. He shares second position with childhood buddy Cesar Ababa and distant cousin Antonio Lascuna.

Danny delos Santos submitted a 69 to be in third spot, a stroke ahead of Robert Pactolerin, Mars Pucay, Roger Cabajar, Edgar Ababa, Ruben Sasutil and Peter Miñoza. Canadian ace Rick Gibson was all alone at 71.

Mario Siodina led the group at 72 as he also inched ahead in the 36-hole CAP Seniors Challenge, pacing perennial threat Roger Antonio by just a stroke in the tourney also supported by Camp John Hay and the Fil-Estate Group of Companies.

Pagunsan is preparing intensely for his forthcoming Japan Tour campaign in March, where he is a conditional entry and eligible for at least five in the main circuit and the entire challenge tour.

"I'm dreaming of it everyday, I can't wait till I get to my first crack at the big money in Japan," said Pagunsan, who barely missed winning his first professional crown when he lost the Philippine Open to Gerald Rosales last November.

And with the way he teamed the Masters course yesterday, Pagunsan felt he's ready for the giants in Japan golf like Jumbo Ozaki and Shigeki Maruyama.

His statistics indicate sheer consistency: 17 greens in regulation, no missed fairways and just 28 putts that contributed to his best-ever 18-and 9-hole score.

DELOS SANTOS

PAGUNSAN

"I can't remember playing a better round, it's a relief to be playing the Masters course from the shorter tees," he said.

Pagunsan's only brush with danger came on the third hole where he hit the bunker with his approach. But even the sand wedge was on target and he was able to save par from about three feet. He had a clear shot at a 63 but wasted a sure-birdie opportunity on the short par-5 18th after needing to hit his third shot from a deeply buried lie on the bunker.

Pagunsan actually equalled the course record but his score could not be recognized as such since the field did not play from the actual championship tees.

The scores:

64—R. Pagunsan

68—C. Casas, C. Ababa, T. Lascuna

69—D. delos Santos

70—P. Miñoza, R. Pactolerin, M. Pucay, R. Cabaja, E. Ababa, R. Sasutil

71—R. Gibson, E. Sanchez

72—M. Siodina, D. Cruz, Ron. Pactolerin, R. Banares

Woods sprains knee

PEBBLE BEACH, California—Until he got tripped up by an autograph seeker and sprained a knee ligament during a practice round Wednesday, Tiger Woods spent the day soaking up some sunshine and plenty of good vibes. That's not too difficult considering Woods was back at his beloved Pebble Beach.

"I've always enjoyed playing here, seeing the beauty of it," Woods said. "This golf course is right there in front of you."

Pebble Beach is also the place where Woods made the most stunning comeback of his career, making up for seven strokes behind with seven strokes to play in the AT&T National Pro-Am.

He holed out from the fairway on No. 15 for eagle, nearly holed out from the next fairway and then birdied the 18th to go from seven strokes down to a two-shot victory, his sixth straight on the PGA Tour. *AP*

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Pacquiao makes 4th title defense Feb. 17

MANNY Pacquiao will defend his WBC international super-bantamweight against Japanese challenger Tetsutora Senrima on Feb. 17.

The fight topbills two other bouts at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City.

The 22-year-old Pacquiao will be making his fourth defense of the crown he won in December 1999. He previously beat challengers Arnel Barotillo, Seung Kwon Chae and Nadel Hussein.

Flyweight titlist Randy Mangubat will stake his crown against Bert Cano, while Zarlit Rodrigo will put his minimum weight crown on the line against Ernesto Rubillar in the undercards.

The triple championships is being promoted by Gabriel "Bebot" Elorde and supported by Rizal Gov. Casimiro "Ito" Ynares.

Pacquiao is currently training in his hometown, Gen. Santos City and will fly to Manila on Feb. 10, while Senrima will arrive in the country on Feb. 11.

Lewis vs Rahman

LONDON—Lennox Lewis' next defense of his world heavyweight title will be aired in Britain on state-run BBC television.

The deal to air Lewis' April 21 bout against Hasim Rahman was confirmed Wednesday by the BBC. Lewis' previous fights were telecast in Britain by the satellite network Sky TV.

"It's important that the British public get the opportunity to see me, especially those who haven't been able to travel to my fights," Lewis said. "It's an opportunity for them to see how much I have improved over the years, that's something I want them to have."

Live boxing has been off terrestrial television in Britain since 1995 when promoter Frank Warren moved his fights to Sky. The last heavyweight championship bout on the BBC was in 1986. *AP*

West Negros booters rip Laguna side, 6-1

BACOLOD CITY—Host West Negros College gave the hometown crowd a big reason to celebrate Wednesday by cruising to a 6-1 victory over Laguna's P. Guevarra Memorial School after favored St. Paul School of Iloilo had clobbered NCR titlist De La Salle Zobel, 4-1, in the 17th Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 national football finals at the Paglaum Sports Complex here.

Siegfried Apurado and Billy Batayola starred with two goals apiece as the WNC booters topped Group A to claim a semifinal slot in the tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with Adidas as official ball.

The SPS squad also advanced to the crossover semis together with three-time national champion DLSZ and tough La Salle Academy of Iligan City.

The Negrenses, who barely managed to tie La Salle Academy on opening day, drew first blood barely eight minutes into the match on Apurado's swift attempt after a scramble at the goalmouth.

They raced to a whopping 6-0 lead on markers by Lyle Infante in the 16th, Erwin Sison (29th), Batayola (33rd and 39th) and Apurado (58th) before Jeremiah Arceta knocked in Laguna's lone goal in the 65th minute.

The DLSZ boys broke the ice in the 10th minute through Biboy Castillo. But the Ilonggos stepped up their attacks and leveled the count in the 31st on Mark Stephen Biona's marker.

After one minute, Kimley Delgado came through to give SPS the lead for good. The other SPS scorers were Jessey Diaz in the 41st and Relan Britania in the 84th.

The longest running nationwide youth soccerfest is hosted by the Negros occidental Football Association headed by Rep. Charlie O. Cojuangco.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Seton Hall Pirates vs Miami Hurricanes at 8 a.m., North Carolina Tar Heels vs Duke Blue Devils at 10 a.m. and Cincinnati Bearcats vs Charlotte 49ers at 4:30 p.m. on ESPN

NBA – Philadelphia 76ers vs New York Knicks at 9 a.m. (r- 9 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Phoenix Open Highlights at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r – 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

Heineken Classic 2001, Day Two at 1:30 p.m. (r- 11:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

LPGA Subaru Memorial of Naples, Second Round at 8 p.m. on ESPN

HOCKEY: NHL Power Week! at 4 p.m. on ESPN

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Robbers, book lovers

STUDENTS of the Santolan High School in Santolan, Pasig will have to share the use of textbooks and make do with fewer chairs for now. Early yesterday, unidentified men broke into the school's supply room and took 520 textbooks, 13 classroom chairs and other school supplies.

Agnes E. Donato

BARE EYE: Erap Estrada a threat to Dolphy's crown A22

Indian slain, Korean injured in QC attacks

1 victim on board BMW, the other on motorbike

By PHILIP C. TUBEZA

TWO foreigners were shot in separate attacks in Quezon City on Wednesday, resulting in the death of an Indian moneylender and the wounding of a Korean businessman.

Indian Malkiat Sandhu, 50, of TS Cruz Subdivision, Barangay Baesa, died from a gunshot wound in the head, while Korean Hwan Woo Lee, 32, of Ma. Felipe Street, Tierra Pura Homes, Barangay Tandang Sora, was critically injured when a gunman sprayed his BMW with bullets, said investigator SPO1 Efren Sobrepeña.

Sandhu was with his wife Anita when he was shot around 2:30 p.m. Wednesday at the corner of Baesa Road and Quirino Highway in Quezon City, police said.

"(Sandhu) had just gotten off his motorbike to collect payment from his borrowers when the gunman shot him," Sobrepeña said.

Anita told police she was talking to one of their clients when she heard a gunshot.

"When she turned around, Anita saw her husband fall to the ground and the suspect running to his own motorcycle," Sobrepeña said.

The suspect shot Malkiat in the lower lip, he added.

After the gunman fled, Anita took her husband to the Manila Central University Hospital.

"Doctors declared him dead on arrival at 3:10 p.m.," Sobrepeña said.

"The suspect might have tried to rob Sandhu but got no money because the victim was still on his way to collect from his clients," the lawman added.

An hour and a half after Sandhu was killed, two other gunmen ambushed Lee at the corner of Kalayaan Avenue and V. Luna Road, said Chief Insp. Roger Yalung.

Lee, a billiard hall supplies trader, was driving his black BMW (MHM-111) and was accompanied by a Reynaldo Yu and a Mr. Tan when they were ambushed at 4:25 p.m., Yalung said.

INDIAN/ A22

Woman with ₱35,000 in bank able to withdraw P238,000

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

POLICE are investigating a 40-year-old woman, suspected to be a computer hacker, who allegedly withdrew P238,000 through an ATM in Caloocan City even when her account contained only P35,000.

Members of the Caloocan Police Investigation and Intelligence Bureau are looking into the involvement of Masivic Dalumpines Galas, of Sabalo Street in Caloocan, in a syndicate that specializes in illegal ATM transactions.

Initial police investigation showed that Galas went to the Bank of the Philippine Islands branch in Monumento about 10 p.m. on Tuesday to withdraw money from her ATM account, which was said to contain P35,000.

A bank security guard said he noticed that Galas was acting suspiciously. He told police that he became even more curious when she took several minutes to finish her transaction.

The security guard checked what Galas was doing inside the ATM booth and saw her repeatedly withdrawing money, police said.

When Galas finally finished, the security guard asked her to go with him to the nearest police precinct to explain her multiple withdrawals.

Police said the P35,000 in Galas' account remained intact.

Galas denied she manipulated the ATM computer system.

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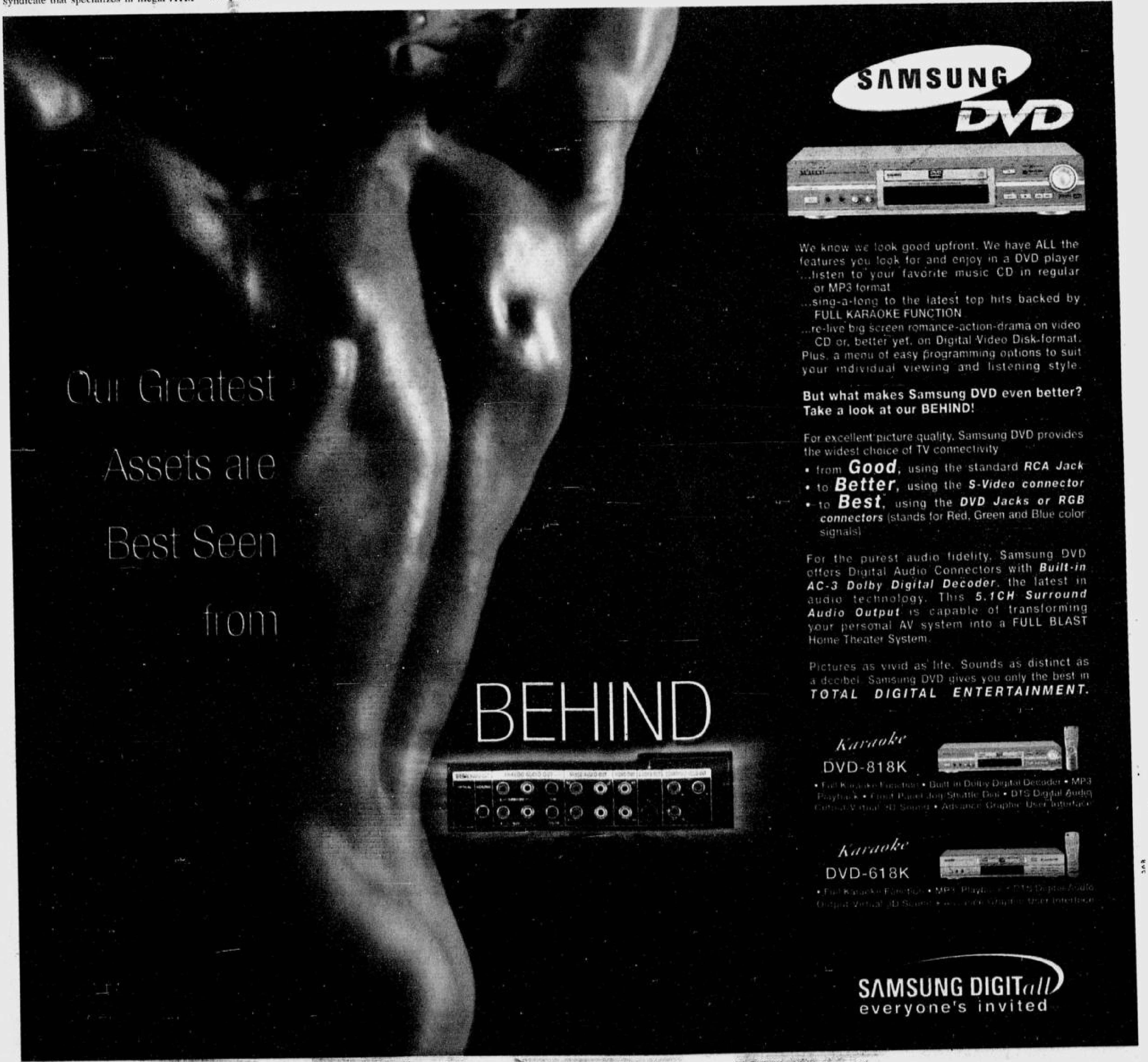

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Shabu seller gets life imprisonment

By Christian V. Esguerra

A CALOOCAN Regional Trial Court has sentenced to life imprisonment a 28-year-old Chinese who was found guilty of selling more than 200 grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu in July 2000.

In a 19-page decision, Judge Myrna Dimaranan-Vidal of Caloocan RTC Branch 127 found Michael Sy of Gen. Luna Street in Binondo, Manila guilty of violating the Dangerous Drugs Act.

He also ordered the convicted drug trafficker to pay a fine of P5 million.

Court records showed that members of the Valenzuela Police Drug Enforcement Unit arrested Sy in front of Our Lady of Grace Parish Church on 11th Avenue in Grace Park, Caloocan on July 20.

Police responded to a tip from one Reynaldo Santos, 20, and his wife Maritess, 31, who had admitted they had been buying shabu from Sy.

Police earlier arrested the couple in their house on Pascual and M. De Los Reyes streets in Gen. T. de Leon, Valenzuela during a buy-bust operation.

During the interrogation, Mrs. Santos agreed to help police track down Sy.

She scheduled a meeting with Sy in front of Our Lady of Grace Parish Church to remit proceeds from the sale of illegal drugs. She also told Sy to sell her more shabu.

Accompanied by PO2 Exequiel Sangco of Valenzuela police, Mrs. Santos waited at the meeting place until Sy arrived on board a black Honda Civic (WJE-166).

When she showed Sy the drug money, he took out a plastic bag containing 246.29 grams of shabu from the car compartment.

Sangco then called his police backup and arrested Sy.

During the hearings, Sy argued he was framed. He said he was supposed to meet Maritess but only to ask for P200,000 as payment for a piece of merchandise.

Sy also accused the arresting officers of taking his P35,000, pieces of jewelry worth P30,000, and a passbook for his bank account that contained P3 million.

But Judge Vidal junked Sy's alibi as the court found Sangco's "candid, categorized and straightforward." Sangco had positively identified Sy in his testimony.

Judge Vidal also pointed out that if police had robbed Sy, he should have immediately filed charges against them.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 2, 2001
Presentation of the Lord

1st Reading: **Mal 3:1-4**
2nd Reading: **Heb 2:14-18**
Gospel: **Lk 2:22-40**

When the day came for the purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought the baby up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: *Every firstborn male shall be consecrated to God.* And they offered a sacrifice as ordered in the law of the Lord: *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*

There lived in Jerusalem at this time a very upright and devout man named Simeon; the Holy Spirit was in him. He looked forward to the time when the Lord would comfort Israel, and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before seeing the Messiah of the Lord. So he was led into the Temple by the Holy Spirit at the time the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law.

Simeon took the child in his arms and blessed God, saying,

"Now, O Lord, you can dismiss
your servant in peace,
for you have fulfilled your word
and my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you display for all the people to see.
Here is the light you will reveal to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel."

His father and mother wondered at what was said about the child. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction, while a sword will pierce your own soul. Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light."

There was also a prophetess named Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. After leaving her father's home, she had been seven years with her husband, and since then she had been continually about the Temple, serving God as a widow night and day in fasting and prayer. She was now eighty-four. Coming up at that time, she gave praise to God and spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When the parents had fulfilled all that was required by the law of the Lord, they returned to their town, Nazareth in Galilee. There the child grew in stature and strength and was filled with wisdom: the grace of God was upon him.

Commentary:

The child who is presented to God turns out to be God's own present to his people. The old man Simeon and the prophetess Anna are overwhelmed by the gift that this child is destined to be, not just for Israel's redemption but for the Gentiles' as well. Presentation is therefore about becoming both a gift to God and a gift from God. Children are brought to the temple (or to the Church) only for a purpose: to be reminded of this giftedness, and to gradually develop a sense of mission and purpose as they grow up. While in the home they are basically just children of their parents, in God's home they are to discover that they are God's children, members of a larger family that includes all humankind.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City, U.P. P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Website: http://www.cnl.net/claret

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Mere relationship of witness to victim does not impair credibility—The assessment of credibility of witnesses made by the trial court is generally accorded great weight and respect in view of its unique opportunity to observe the demeanor of the witnesses during their testimonies. In the absence of any matters of substance, which may have been overlooked by the trial court, we find no cogent reason to overturn the findings of facts of the trial court. The mere fact that the sole eyewitness presented in court is the brother-in-law of the victim does not affect his credibility. Mere relationship of a witness to the victim, whether by consanguinity or affinity, does not necessarily impair his credibility as a witness nor does it impair his positive and clear testimony and render it unworthy. On the contrary, relationship with a victim would deter a witness from indiscriminately implicating anybody to the crime. His nature and usual interest would be to identify the malefactor and secure his conviction to obtain true justice for the death of a relative. More importantly, the eyewitness account as to the manner of the attack and the location of the wounds is corroborated by the post-mortem examination. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, *En Banc*, People v. Hilot, G.R. No. 129532, October 5, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

UP induction

THE NEW officers of the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity Alumni Association will be inducted tonight at 7 at Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan.

To be inducted are lawyer Romulo Lumauig (Diliman) as president and the other newly elected officers and appointed staff. Lumauig will take over from Vicente Tupaz (Los Baños) in turnover ceremonies to be presided by founding brother Rico Arranz.

Induction program committee chair Eugracio de Gracia said Justice Vicente Mendoza will keynote the affair while Cosmos Bottling Philippines president Tony Panajon will deliver an inspirational address.

Outstanding UP Beta Sigmans in various fields will be recognized during the ceremonies.

IWCPI meet

THE INNER Wheel Clubs of the Philippines Inc. is holding its 35th national conference with the theme "Strangers are friends we have not met" today and tomorrow at the Manila Hotel.

IWCPI president Dr. Mary Gener-Calalang will give a report on the status of the projects and programs of Inner Wheel as well as new programs, including an advocacy program for the elderly.

About 1,600 members of Inner Wheel from the eight districts of the country are expected to attend the conference, which will also include a fellowship night with ballroom dancing.

Keynote speaker is Gov. Mary Jane Ortega, a past national president of Inner Wheel. The overall chair is Zeny Farcon.

Erap Estrada a threat to Dolphy's crown

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

NOBODY makes me laugh harder than Willie Nep standing up as Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

You could swear the Philippine peso could've performed better had it carried Willie Nep's signature instead.

The magical mimic is a hilarious rip-off.

But, hey, when Erap Estrada himself did an Erap at Club Filipino on Wednesday, I got knocked out.

Ha, ha. I had to pick myself up from the floor.

Nobody, I swear to Mike Velarde, does Joseph Estrada the President more classically than Erap Estrada the Comedian.

I had to step out and announce to friends and neighbors that Dolphy's reign as King of Comedy is seriously threatened.

And to Willie Nep: You just have to drop the Erap act until Erap Estrada himself has returned to normal.

* * *

Listen: Joseph Estrada insisting with a quiver of his signature moustache that Erap Estrada is still the President of the Philippines will be hard to beat when they give out the award for the finest comedy skit.

I tremendously enjoyed that part of the Erap speech on Wednesday when he raised his clenched fist, complete with the white presidential wristband, to declare his reign.

Boomed the newest comedian in town: "I remain the duly elected President of the Philippines. I have not resigned. I have no permanent disability."

Whoever did the skit similarly deserves a big applause.

Both the writer and star performer should be congratulated.

They have just muddled up, happily, the world of the disabled.

Reminder: If Erap gets the deserved best comedian trophy, he will have to share it with an entire cast, including members of his families, mainly Guia Gomez's JV Ejercito, who were all present during the show.

* * *

Now, to less funny matters.

After what had been said, mainly by the foreign media, about the status of People Power as a weapon against tyranny and corruption, we have to consider this suggestion to incorporate the bloodless uprising in the Constitution.

If this novel idea is realized, the Filipino people would not only have a patent to the popular, bloodless revolt that has, so far, toppled two hated Presidents.

The likes of Erap Estrada would be thrown into jail. Right away.

There would also be less of this nasty chitchat about the legality of People Power itself.

Yes, the world readily applauded the Filipino people's second straight ouster last month of a rotten leader by the Filipino people. But before the celebrations could die down, not a few spectators, including former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and members of the foreign media, labeled People Power 2 unconstitutional.

It was their way of saying we should not have taken ourselves too seriously and instead allowed the Joseph Estrada Impeachment trial to go its full course.

In fact, Time correspondent Anthony Spaeth has come up with a rather unsavory label for the peaceful revolt that ousted Joseph Estrada.

He called it mob rule.

* * *

Yes, mob rule.

At first blush, that did not sound truly disparaging. Mob, after all, is generally taken by local pedestrians to mean a big crowd.

The term at first sounded cute, amusing.

But when I looked in the English dictionary, I was stricken dumb. Mob was defined as something pertaining to, or characteristic of lawless, irrational, disorderly crowd; or a crowd engaged in lawless violence.

Another dictionary defined mob as a disorderly mass of common people; regarded as ignorant or deficient.

We can never tell which of the two dirty definitions the Time correspondent had in mind when he wrote his little essay on the ouster of Erap Estrada.

Wrote Spaeth: "More likely, People Power has become its own institution, and one that seems monopolized by a certain clique. I spent many days in crowds like the ones on Edsa (last week). They were the nicest mobs I have ever been in."

Spaeth, in conclusion, claimed that People Power "has become an acceptable term for a troubling phenomenon: one that used to be known as mob rule."

* * *

Well, with that account, it became clear that Spaeth did come to Edsa but he was not present in the revolt.

He may have looked but he obviously did not see and feel what was really going on around him.

For one, the hordes that stormed the Edsa Shrine to openly oppose injustice and gangsterism in the government did not go there to play it nice.

Had he also used a little sensibility, Spaeth would not have missed the point.

The participants in that revolt may have indeed appeared like they were a happy, chanting multitude. But it would be blindly foolish of anybody to claim that the protesting citizens that swirled liked a raging sea at Edsa would not have put their lives on the line if need be.

If tanks, say, had rumbled down Edsa to suppress the uprising, the people, mainly the nuns, would have stood their ground.

It had been done and proven in People Power 1. The thundering outrage of People Power 2 was itself so solid and singular that the military brass themselves had to concede and side with the masses.

* * *

I doubt if even one protestor went to Edsa to play it nice.

I for one bucked a painful arthritic knee and proceeded to where every self-respecting Filipino citizen should have been in those critical moments of our life as a people.

Anyway, some Americans, including Spaeth himself, did not feel too comfortable with People Power 2 obviously because, unlike in the first one, they did not have a crucial part in the success of the latest peaceful uprising.

You can bet the American press would have come up with a kinder report to the world if we had allowed their tiresome world-police-force mentality to muddle our patriotism.

Remember how Washington had quietly issued that stern "cut, and cut clean" order to Ferdinand Marcos?

At least, we can put it on record that the newly installed US president has recognized the Government of the Fighting Filipino People under Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

We also have to thank Washington for not meddling this time.

If America had, say, opted to join in the Erap Estrada ouster, the newest comedian in town would have been vacationing in Hawaii by now.

And Dolphy's reign as King of Comedy would not have been threatened at all.

Consortium offers 'lasting solution' to trash problem

A CONSORTIUM of foreign firms yesterday assured government authorities it could provide a permanent solution to Metro Manila's garbage disposal problem.

Jancom Environmental Corp., the local subsidiary of Vivendi and Alstom Power, the two principal partners of the consortium, said the solid waste processing facility it proposes to build would be similar to those being operated in most modern cities all over the world.

Vivendi operates more than a hundred waste processing facilities and is considered No. 1 in the world in environmental services. Alstom Power is known worldwide as a power generation specialist.

Jancom said the waste processing facilities employ the most efficient system in the collection and disposal of waste, including segregation at source, sanitary transport, treatment, storage, recycling, and conversion into fertilizer fuel.

"Its entire operation involves all the specific guidelines set forth in the Solid Waste Management Act 2000 signed into a law a few days ago by President Macapagal," Vivendi official Jorge Mora said.

He said the consortium would also build strategically located materials recovery facilities (MRFs) where raw garbage would be automatically sorted out, segregated, compacted and recycled, substantially cutting down collecting and hauling cost to LGUs.

He said the rest of the biodegradable materials would be compacted and used as fuel to generate electricity in the waste-to-energy plant.

Mora said the power plant would not emit toxic or foul-smelling fumes or pollute the air as the thermal converter process, generating heat of more than 1,000 degrees centigrade, destroys whatever impurities would remain in the waste materials fed into the combustion engine.

Jancom officials said the MRFs or sorting and recycling centers would be operative within 10 months while the main power plant would be on stream within two and a half years.

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Manila cop killed in Tondo

By Jerome Aning

SPO1 Victoriano Cortez of the Western Police District was playing an illegal video *karera* machine when four men crept up and stabbed him dead in Tondo, Manila at dawn yesterday.

Cortez, 43, of Sunflower Street, Tondo, and assigned to WPD Station 7 on Jose Abad Santos Avenue, died on the spot from several stab wounds, police said.

Investigators have arrested Elmon Solis, 27, a customs brokerage employee and resident of Esmeralda Street, also of Tondo.

Elmon denied his part in the murder.

Police are looking for Elmon's brother Elmer, 25, a pedicab driver, also of Esmeralda Street, and their companions known only as "Odel" and "Linggit" Dizon.

Elmon claimed that before the killing, he decided to go home when he sensed trouble was brewing between his group and Cortez.

But Elmon could not tell police what caused the quarrel.

SPO1 Benito Cabatbat of the city police homicide section said Cortez went to the Solis residence about 3 a.m. to play video karera, which is prohibited by law.

Elmon and his companions were drinking at a table nearby, SPO1 Cabatbat said.

Neighbors later told police that about 4 p.m., they heard Elmon's group and Cortez arguing loudly. They said they heard Elmon's group shouting at the lawman to leave the house at once.

Police found Cortez slumped dead on the video machine, indicating he was attacked treacherously.

He had a deep slash in the back of the head, stab wounds on the right side of the torso, and puncture marks—said to be from an ice pick—in the back, nape and throat, police said.

Villamor Cortez, 43, a cousin of the policeman, said he accompanied the lawman to the Solis residence after playing a card game.

Investigators learned the video *karera* is maintained by a certain "Sancho."

SPO1 Cabatbat said Cortez's 9mm-caliber Beretta service pistol was missing and could have been stolen by the suspects.

Police have filed murder charges against Solis and are combing Tondo for the other suspects.

Indian slain, Korean . . .

(From page 21)

Witnesses told police the two gunmen were on board a black motorcycle.

Witnesses said the gunmen sped past the BMW and then stopped. Just before the BMW got to where the motorcycle was parked, one of the two men alighted from the motorcyle and opened fire.

Five bullets pierced the tinted window beside the driver's seat and hit Lee in the head and other parts of the body, police said.

The gunman continued firing but missed Lee's passengers.

Lee was later taken to the V. Luna Medical Center.

"We still do not know what his condition is at this time because we were not allowed to enter the hospital," Yalung told the Inquirer yesterday afternoon.

Police have invited Lee's Filipino wife to the Central Police District's Criminal Investigation Unit in Camp Karingal, Quezon City for questioning.

'WHAT WOMEN WANT'

Gibson dances in grand old Hollywood way

By Ruben Cruz Jr.

REVIEW

DURING a drunken stupor once, I accidentally found myself trapped inside one of the cubicles in the ladies' room of a local bar. I couldn't get out while the women were outside the stall because I was afraid somebody might scream on seeing me and I might get lynched. So I stayed there for a good hour or so waiting for a clean break to get out.

That was one of the most anxious but enlightening hours I spent sitting in a toilet. During that hour, I was able to listen to the kind of conversations women have in restrooms (so this is why they go in groups when they have to go).

I felt in on their secrets. And I thought then, what an amazing gift it would be to be privy to women's thoughts and not just their conversations.

Mel Gibson's new movie, "What Women Want," has precisely that concept for its storyline. Sadly, the insights it presents about what women want and their thoughts are not as substantive as my "aha!" experience inside the women's restroom that night.

The movie is entertaining to be sure, what with Gibson and Helen Hunt in the cast, but after the formula has taken its course, there is not much to remember of it. Which really means there is still a great film waiting to be made about the underlying premise of a male sexist gaining access to women's thoughts.

The moral of this movie is simple: If you really want to know what women want, just listen to them. Gibson's character, Nick Marshall, doesn't do that at all. Reared in the Vegas casino life by his showgirl mother and with insensitive machos as role models, Nick grows up to be a quintessential man's man—chauvinist, egocentric, but an incorrigible and quite a successful seducer.

He's also a successful advertising man on his way to a most-coveted promotion until his boss, played by Alan Alda, gives the job to Darcy Maguire (Hunt) who seems more able to help the firm earn a niche in the billion-dollar young female market.

Familiar but entertaining

Nick can't accept the fact that he's clueless about the female demographic, and so he takes on Darcy's challenge to "get to know the woman inside" him. This leads to a bathroom accident, which, a la Twilight Zone, finds Nick actually able to hear women's uncensored thoughts.

That's about as far as I go with the plot, but I need not divulge any more for one to know what's coming. Obnoxious character goes through life-altering experience, then reforms. Does that sound familiar? Off the bat, I can think of Bill Murray in "Groundhog Day" and Jim Carrey's "Liar, Liar." I am sure you can think of others.

But I did say it's entertaining, right? Well, it's hard to make a mistake when making a romantic comedy, especially when you're drawing on a formula that's supposed to work. But what really tipped the odds in favor of the film is that Mel Gibson stars in it.

HELEN HUNT stars with Gibson, who could have produced more sparks with another actress.

Gibson is handsome, charming and a damn good actor. It's really surprising that this is only his first time to play the lead role in a true romantic comedy when he seems a natural for the part. The guy is 44 years old and I noticed the twentysomething women in the theater just swooning over him.

Indeed, he elevates this film like no other can. His comic timing, which was already noticeable in his Martin Riggs character in "Lethal Weapon," is dead-on. His romantic appeal cuts across generations and perhaps even sexes.

And his prankish nature is just right for a film full of preposterous situations that lampoon him.

Amazingly graceful

But there is one standout scene that really sets Gibson apart from the other fine actors of today, and which reveals he's on the path to true Hollywood greatness.

Early in the movie, buoyed by the music of Frank Sinatra and alcohol, he does an impromptu dance all over his apartment, using a coat hanger for a partner. The result is amazingly graceful and old Hollywood, with Gibson looking very Gene Kelly-ish (or is it more Fred Astaire?).

Really, I can't think of any of Gibson's contemporaries who could have pulled off that scene with such aplomb and charm. Kevin Costner, for instance, would have probably looked drunk and just that.

The movie gathers a fine ensemble of women for Gibson to be charming with. Hunt delivers another smart performance; although, honestly, I think Gibson would have had a more ideal combination, one with more cinematic sparks, with another actress, say, Julianne Moore.

Marisa Tomei plays Lola, a coffee shop clerk Gibson relentlessly tries to bed. It's an enormous credit to her abilities that she can be vibrant and memorable even in a secondary role. I felt more for her character, a neurotic, love-weary but still hopeful woman, than I did for Hunt's Darcy.

I think the movie's makers would have done well to extend Tomei's character and further exploit her talent. The rather curt closure she was given, I feel, is one of the things that make the film seem half-baked even if it's more than two hours long.

Hilarious cameo

Another underused talent is Judy Greer who injects a fresh intensity to another minor role, a suicidal advertising messenger whom Nick befriends in the end. Something tells me she's headed for the A-list of Hollywood actresses someday, given the right breakout vehicle.

Bette Midler also appears in a hilarious cameo as the psychologist who convinces Nick that hearing women's thoughts is not a curse but a gift he could use "to rule the world." And Ashley Johnson adoringly portrays Nick's neglected teenage daughter with whom he reconciles after he learns to use his "gift."

The film is both directed and produced by Nancy Meyers who previously wrote the screenplay of the remake of "The Parent Trap," and before that, "Father of the Bride," which, if you've seen those films, would make you realize that Meyers does indeed know what women want—at least in a film.

The look and feel of the movie is very much "old school," with the accompanying big band music and the immortal Frank Sinatra finely complementing the idea of timelessness.

A lot has been written about Gibson being the modern day Cary Grant, and with "What Women Want," it seems he chose just the right film to step into the mold of the Hollywood icon. The future does look bright for him if he decides to lay down the guns.

But even if he doesn't, his solo dance in the movie would certainly be included in the highlight reel, many years from now, when he receives his Oscar lifetime achievement award.

Teapot tempest over MTRCB chairmanship

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE TEAPOT tempest in movie circles these days is over the change of leadership at the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board. Word has it that the MTRCB's chairmanship has been offered to a number of logical choices but they have turned it down for one reason or another.

The early choices have been more or less liberal in orientation, but since they have declined the chairmanship, the post could be offered to a conservative. That would really tick off the movie industry because it would negate the liberal advances that have been made in the past few years.

The chairmanship of the MTRCB is regarded as a premium appointment because it more or less sets the tone for the film industry, the nature of its movie products, and ultimately what millions of Filipinos get to see on the movie screen. If the chair is conservative, sex and violence and avant-garde themes would be out.

This would be sad news to movie people and film buffs, but glad tidings for "moral guardians," parents and educators who worry that "liberated" movies are often excessive and can pollute the country's ethical environment.

Of course, film people point out that sexy or violent movies are classified "For Adults Only," so vulnerable young viewers can't be exposed to them. But the moral guardians believe that this rule isn't followed all that strictly, especially in provincial theaters.

In any case, movie people hope that the new MTRCB chair (he or she may have already been named by the time this comes out) is a liberal. If the new chair is a conservative, we may find ourselves back in the overly restrictive period of the late '80s and early '90s, when the country's leaders didn't trust movie people and prevented them from sitting on the board.

This was a step backward because the MTRCB was precisely formed as a board that would provide a transition to self-regulation on the part of the movie industry (as it's done in the States, for instance), thus the stipulation that 15 representatives of the movie industry be made a part of the MTRCB.

Since the country's leaders then didn't believe that movie people could police their own ranks, this stipulation was honored more in the breach than in the observance. Only during the Estrada administration was industry representation restored in the MTRCB. Depending on how liberal the new dispensation is, that representation could vanish once more.

That would be a pity, because the ultimate goal should really be classification by self-regulation. In addition, take note of the fact that the non-movie-industry membership of the MTRCB is sometimes made up of people who have been appointed to the board not because they're astute evaluators of film ethics but as a political favor to them or to their well-placed relatives.

If anything should end, it should be this practice of using the MTRCB as a venue for patronage politics.

In our view, the ideal composition of the MTRCB should be some responsible industry people, some parents, some educators—and quite a number of psychologists, especially child psychologists.

Why? Because the MTRCB's task is to classify movies according to the level of audience maturity that can view them with no negative effects on their psyche.—Who can better discern this than psychologists, who know the levels of tolerance of various age groups, especially children?

The operating principle should be: Adults can take care of themselves, but minors should be protected. Also: various people's rights should be protected by MTRCB decisions, as much as possible—the right of filmmakers to the untrammeled exercise of their art and craft; the right of minors to be protected from movies that are too mature for them to handle; and the right of adults to freely choose the movies they want to see, precisely because they're adults.

When the new MTRCB chair and board members are named and start coming up with their film evaluations, we'll have a clearer idea of how well or how badly these rights will be acknowledged, upheld and defended in the months to come.

The funnyman of primetime news is a former errand boy

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

ABS-CBN TV host **Marc Logan** never dreamed he would be in front of the cameras.

When he was a high school student in Baguio, Marc wanted to enter the Philippine Military Academy. But apparently, he was not cut out to be in the military.

A writer in the school organ, Marc went on to take up journalism at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

"It was the closest thing to writing that I could think of, even if I wasn't sure what I really wanted at that time," Marc recalls.

He did his practicum at the Journal, where editor **Alex Fernando** saw he could be a news reporter. Soon, Marc was hired as a correspondent.

"I could turn a simple police story of snatching into something sensational and make it land in the front page," he beams. "I was paid then on a per-column inch basis so my target was always the front page because the pay was higher."

He was eventually employed as a regular staffer and was assigned to cover important beats, including Malacañang. "I did stories on the six coup attempts during the Cory administration," he says.

In 1996, while he was covering Malacañang, ABS-CBN hired him to be a desk editor. A year later, "out of boredom," he started experimenting with feature stories. Out-of-the-ordinary news features like freak animals slowly earned for him a reputation.

"When the network got calls like that one about a pig with two heads, people in the newsroom knew they should go to me," Marc says.

He learned how to put color even in a light news feature about a town fiesta. That started his stint on "TV Patrol." His segment, spiced with humor, was always at the end of the newscast and was meant to balance the serious reports.

"After eight years as a print reporter, I was doing something different," Marc says. "I also discovered that I could also be fluent in Tagalog."

His first break on TV was a news report about a 12-year-old boy who committed suicide because of his disappointment about the environment.

"I failed four times just doing the voice-over," Marc relates. "Noli (de Castro) didn't like it. He said it was too *malamya*. On my fifth try, I finally passed. I was so proud of the story. After that, *sumobra naman yata 'yung pagiging* hyper *ko*."

Marc's "TV Patrol" segment got overwhelming feedback even from advertisers and ABS-CBN decided to spin it off as a new program, "Pinoy Exposed," which he hosts with pretty-boy **JV Villar**.

"My dream was to have a local version of 'Guinness Book of World Records' by presenting different feats of Filipinos," Marc grants. "At first, it was hard to convince the advertisers and my ABS-CBN bosses that the concept would work, but after more than a year of 'Pinoy Exposed,' I'd like to believe we're doing good work.

LOGAN joined pizza parlor sing-along contests to earn extra money.

"The program ranks No. 7 in the overall weekly shows. It is also the only show in news and current affairs which was given a primetime slot on Saturday. All the rest come after the late-night news."

In college, Marc was a working student. "I'm the fifth of six children and my father was already too weak to send all of us to school, so I had to work."

He was paid P90 a week by a Chinese couple for whom he cleaned the house, bought groceries and delivered beer.

"I would even join sing-along contests at Shakey's so I would have money for my transportation fare to school," Marc says.

Although he still doesn't claim to be a millionaire, Marc says he lives comfortably on his ABS-CBN salary.

He juggles his working hours among five TV shows. He is executive producer of "Balita Alas Singko ng Umaga," the network's 5 a.m. newscast, and later becomes associate producer of the daily morning wake-upper, "Alas Singko y Medya," where he also hosts a segment, "Balitang Kyut," which focuses on human interest stories around the world.

He continues his much-awaited segment on "TV Patrol." Then there's the weekly "Pinoy Exposed." He also does voice-over spiels on the noontime show, "Magandang Tanghali, Bayan," every Saturday.

During the Senate impeachment trial, he did a humorous take on senator-judges who were caught sleeping during the proceedings.

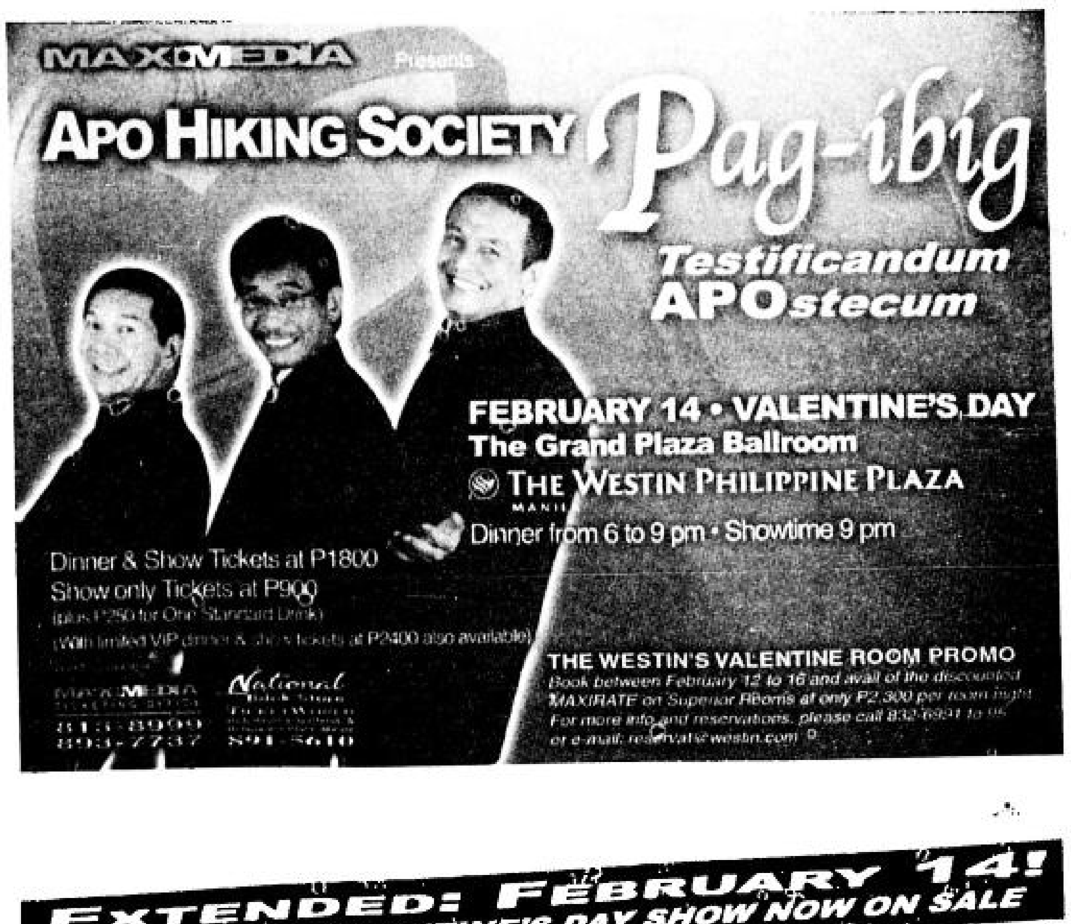
"I almost had to explain at the Senate because they singled me out for that report," Marc says. "I did a total of seven stories on the impeachment, from the time Manny Villar 'rapped' at the House of Representatives. We did a rerun of all the stories on 'Pinoy Exposed' last week."

Of his style, he says, "I just do the reports in a different way and in my own style. It starts with a rhyme and ends with a rhyme, but always with a punchline.".

Leo Valdez in Valentine show

THE punishing schedule of "Miss Saigon" did not stop **Leo Valdez** from accepting an offer to do a Valentine concert. On Feb. 12, The Engineer will get to

THE FUNNYMAN/A24



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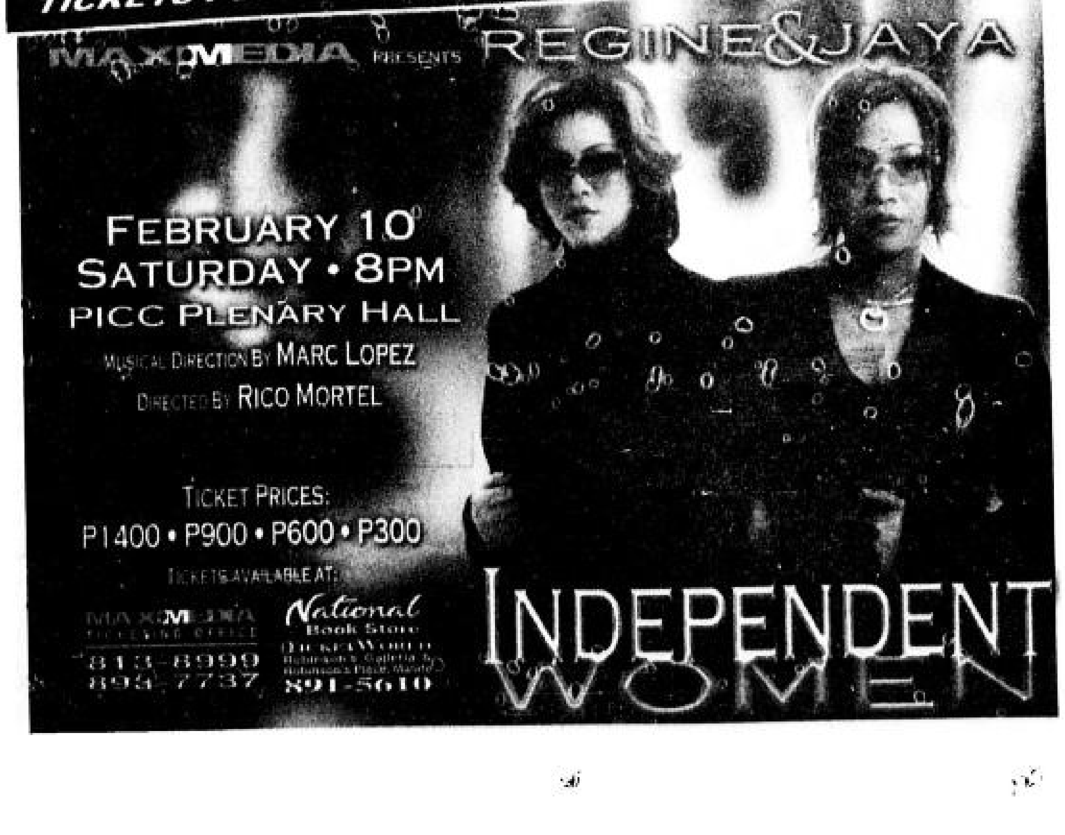

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9	DOLBY SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
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11	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR.		8820950
1	ULTRA SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
SM MEGAMALL		6331901 • 6329401
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	WHAT WOMEN WANT
2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	DTS	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	DUDE
6	DOLBY SURROUND	RED PLANET
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BOOBA
9	DOLBY SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
10	DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
SM CITY NORTH EDSA		9295452
1	DOLBY SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA
5	DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS
7	DTS	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	RED PLANET
12	DOLBY SURROUND	DUDE
SM SOUTHMALL		8066888 • 8068782
1	ULTRA SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RED PLANET
7	ULTRA SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	WHAT WOMEN WANT
9	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
10	ULTRA SURROUND	THE YARDS
TUTUBAN CENTER		2514302
1	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
SM CEBU		2313876
1	DOLBY SURROUND	RED PLANET
2	ULTRA SURROUND	DUETS
3	ULTRA SURROUND	DUDE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	NAGHUHUMIYAW
6	ULTRA SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
7	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
SM ILOILO		3209422
1	ULTRA SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	ULTRA SURROUND	SUGATANG PUSO
5	ULTRA SURROUND	LOST SOULS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
8	ULTRA SURROUND	KANGKONG
SM PAMPANGA		7128015
1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
3	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TABI TABI PO

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3 TABI TABI PO
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

GLORIETTA 4 (All Digital Sound)
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2 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 VERTICAL LIMIT THX — In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 SUSAN'S PLAN (Phil. Premiere) — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5 AMERICAN PSYCHO — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT
1 THE YARDS — In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 WHAT WOMEN WANT THX — In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE YARDS — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 SYOTA NG BAYAN — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE

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1 (DDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2 (SDDS)	THE YARDS
3 (DTS)	WHAT WOMEN WANT
4 GOLD (DTS)	DUDE
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	WHAT WOMEN WANT
6 GOLD (SDDS)	CLOSED
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	TABI TABI PO
9	BOOBA
10	SYOTA NG BAYAN

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	TABI TABI PO
2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3 (DTS)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4	WHIPPED
5	
6 (DTS)	

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2 (DTS)	RESERVE
3	TABI TABI PO

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

Starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	BOOBA
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	TABI TABI PO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VERTICAL LIMIT
5	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	TABI TABI PO
4	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	RESERVE
6	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	BOOBA
8	WHAT WOMEN WANT

Uniwide Metromall
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1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	MEET THE PARENT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
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1	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
A	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	BOOBA
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	TABI TABI PO
5	SYOTA NG BAYAN
6	DUDE
7 (DTS)	THE YARDS
8 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMEN WANT
9 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3	TABI TABI PO
4	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5	
6	

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	BOOBA
3	TABI TABI PO
4 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
5	SYOTA NG BAYAN
6 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
7 (DTS)	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
8	BALAHIBONG PUSA
9	MALIKOT ANG AGOS

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
5 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
6	BOOBA
7 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	MALIKOT ANG AGOS

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	MALIKOT ANG PUSA
3 (DTS)	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
6 (DOLBY)	BOOBA
7 (DOLBY)	TABI TABI PO

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN

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(Manila) tel 734.7724

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Jennet	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	VERTICAL LIMIT

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	SYOTA NG BAYAN

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238

1	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5	WHAT WOMAN WANT

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
5	BOOBA
6	VERTICAL LIMIT

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS)	BOOBA
3 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	TABI TABI PO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 (DTS)	TABI TABI PO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 (DTS)	TABI TABI PO
4	REMEMBER THE TITANS
5	BOOBA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	BOOBA
3	MALIKOT ANG AGOS

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	
2	LITTLE NICKY
3	TABI TABI PO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	BOOBA
4	TABI TABI PO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

1 (DTS)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS)	TABI TABI PO

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	TABI TABI PO

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BOOBA
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	TABI TABI PO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2	BOOBA
3	HIGHLANDER
4	REMEMBER THE TITANS

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	CLOSED
2	CLOSED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3	TABI TABI PO
4	VERTICAL LIMIT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	RED PLANET
2	BOOBA
3	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 (DTS EX)	VERTICAL LIMIT

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The funnyman . . .

sing a different repertoire in his solo concert, "Love Leo: An Intimate Evening," at Century Park Hotel Ballroom.

As the vicious character in "Miss Saigon," Leo has become a popular scene-stealer with his scheming, comic ways, sometimes eclipsing even the lead star's poignant portrayal.

After nearly a decade of doing the part which he first did at London's West End, Leo shows no signs of slack. He continues to receive positive feedback for his portrayal, which still overwhelms him.

Yes, he's going to do the show-stopping "American Dream" number in his Valentine concert. "Minus the Cadillac and the sexy dancers," Leo says.

He will sing songs from other musicals like "This is the Moment" from "Jekyll and Hyde," "Music of the Night" from "Phantom of the Opera," "Bring Him Home" from "Les Miserables" and "I Only Want to Say" from "Jesus Christ Superstar."

"I'd like to share music from theater with my audience," Leo says.

He will also sing memorable tunes from local theater productions like "Magsimula Ka."

"That's the song that started it all," he says, recalling his auspicious start as a theater performer in the production that was directed by **Nestor U. Torre.**

"Minsan ang Minahal ay Ako" is a hauntingly beautiful ballad composed by **Ryan Cayabyab** for the musical "Katy." Two songs from "Rama-hari"—"Magbalik Ka Na" and "Noong Unang Panahon"—are also included.

Also part of his concert repertoire are romantic OPM tunes like "Kahit Na," "Sana Maulit Muli," "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin," "Kahit Isang Saglit," Mahawi Man ang Ulap" and "Ikaw."

Joining him in the concert is his special guest **Jinky Llamanzares**, herself a "Miss Saigon" graduate.

The show is mounted by ALV Productions, with **Toti Fuentes** as director and Dingdong Cabazor as director. It is for the benefit of the Kaibigan ng Bayan Foundation.

VALDEZ. To sing songs from the theater with his audience on his Valentine concert.

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❹ THE YARDS
❺ SYOTA NG BAYAN
❻ WHAT WOMEN WANT
❼ BOOBA

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❺ TABI TABI PO
❻ BOOBA

BACOLOD (034)441-0453
❶ REMEMBER THE TITANS
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❸ LITTLE NICKY
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❺ PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
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DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TABI TABI PO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	THE YARDS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	BOOBA
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	SYOTA NG BAYAN
MIRAMAR	LARO SA BAGA / PORNOGRAPHER
ODEON	VERTICAL LIMIT
ODEON-2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
ROBEN	SYOTA NG BAYAN
TANDEM-1	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
TANDEM-2	WHIPPED
TIMES	READY TO RUMBLE / CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
QUEZON-1	TABI TABI PO
REMAR	SYOTA NG BAYAN
REMAR-2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	SYOTA NG BAYAN
OCEAN CINEMA-A	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
OCEAN CINEMA-B	TABI TABI PO
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
CINEMA-2	VERTICAL LIMIT
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
CINEMA-2	TABI TABI PO
CINEMA-3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WHIPPED
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-6	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-7	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
CINEMA-8	BOOBA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
CINEMA-12	DUDE
CINEMA-14	THE YARDS
CINEMA-15	SYOTA NG BAYAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	TABI TABI PO
CINEMA-3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
CINEMA-2	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
CINEMA-3	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-4	THE YARDS
CINEMA-5	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
CINEMA-6	VERTICAL LIMIT

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Two psychics tell the good news and the bad news in 2001

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

ON Monday, I did an episode of my talk show chronicling our fascination with fortune-telling, feng shui and the use of lucky charms. Unfortunately, my show's body is limited to just 38 minutes, so I am writing now about some interesting tidbits that weren't given enough airtime.

About two months ago I had written here about the rose quartz charm bracelets that **Pops (Fernandez)** and I bought in a candy store in Shangri-La Plaza Mall sometime in November. We made a pact not to remove the bracelets until we had found someone we truly loved and who loved us back equally in return.

Rose Quartz is said to promote love and give strength to its wearer. When I appeared as a guest on *Tita* **Jullie Daza**'s Christmas episode of "Jullie," she had remarked that my rose quartz bracelet was too pale. The late feng shui expert **Paul Lao** had told her that for rose quartz to be beneficial, it must be a bright shade of pink. The bracelets Pops and I had were really a faded, almost white pink. Thus it really served very little purpose.

In Binondo, I taped a portion regarding lucky charms. **Maxima**, the proprietress of Charme General Merchandise (757 Ongpin St., telephone number 244-0369) had a great collection of crystal and semi-precious bracelets. I bought a combination rose quartz and white crystal bracelet for myself and Pops to replace our ineffective "love" bracelets.

They also had a bracelet that had almost all the different stones and crystals. Since it is not a particularly auspicious year for people born under the sign of the pig, I got one as protection and I wear it now on my left wrist.

(My oldest sister **Ballsy** and my ABS-CBN boss **Charo Santos Concio** are both "goats." Since it isn't a great year for them, either, I also got them the same bracelets).

I also taped a segment with Mandarin Oriental's **Joseph Chau** regarding what to expect in the Year of the Snake, which he said really only commences on Feb. 4, when the new moon arrives. In Mandarin, there's a store called Yin and Yang, right next to the delicatessen. They also have a wide array of bracelets. I was counseled that to ensure good health I should wear an amethyst bracelet (amethyst is a nice deep violet purple color, and is also the birthstone of those February-born like myself).

For career enhancement, tiger's eye (a deep brown, with touches of metallic beige and yellow swirling inside) was recommended.

I see no harm in trying out these crystals and semi-precious stones. On my right wrist I now wear three bracelets—the amethyst, the rose quartz, and the tiger's eye. I will keep you posted if I stay healthy, if my career continues moving in the right direction, and if my love life blossoms.

If you will give these charm bracelets a try; please do let me know if they will be effective for you.

Another part of that show dealt with the predictions of **Rene Mariano** and **Jojo Acuin** for the year 2001. I am printing some of their notable pronouncements, and let us see at year's end just how accurate they were.

Let's get the bad news out of the way, and remember they both also said that nothing could beat the power of prayer.

Rene and Jojo both said "*magluluksa ang Senado.*" A well-loved statesman, who is relatively young, will pass away quite unexpectedly.

Both psychics said that President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** would face many trials, particularly coming from leftists.

They differed in their predictions when I asked if she would be able to finish up her term (meaning until June 2004). Rene said no and Jojo said yes, but with much difficulty.

Rene said the President should take extra caution because he had very strong vibrations that there would be assassination attempts.

Both psychics warned of bloodshed, most especially during the May elections. Politicians must be very careful when traveling by land because of many possible politically motivated "ambush attacks."

In show business, Rene was fearful that newlyweds **David Buenavacz** and **Jessica Rodriguez** would be hitting a rocky patch. Jojo predicted marital discord between **Donna Cruz** and her husband **Yong Larrazabal**. (If it's any consolation to Donna and Yong, last year Jojo predicted that **Phillip** and I would reconcile, and obviously it didn't happen.)

Both said a young actor or actress would die in a vehicular accident.

And now it's time for the good news.

All businesses related to food and telecommunications would be very prosperous. Companies with a triangular logo would be on the upswing.

The peso will continue to fluctuate, but it won't go beyond P52 to $1.

Former President **Joseph Estrada** won't be able to regain power on the national level, but both psychics were 70 percent to 80 percent sure that the Estradas would be able to win in San Juan.

The **Aga Muhlach-Charlene Gonzales** wedding will take place, and the **Cesar Montano-Sunshine Cruz** marriage will remain stable.

Martin Nievera and Pops won't reconcile, but the former couple will be the best of friends.

It's an easy reelection victory for **Vilma Santos** as mayor of Lipa, Batangas.

Rudy Fernandez won't have an easy time in Quezon City. Both psychics proclaimed a fondness for Rudy, but both were leaning toward a **Sonny Belmonte** victory.

Good news for **Sharon Cuneta** and **Kiko Pangilinan**. Both would be victorious if they chose to run for national positions in 2001.

A Filipino film will garner international recognition and bring home awards. It will also have a worldwide audience.

Both predicted a happy love life for me, with Rene boldly forecasting that within the next six months the man who would be my boyfriend would be the man I would marry.

Unfortunately, the two psychics gave differing initials. Rene said the letters L, E, M or W were very strong in his reading. Jojo said they were letters J, R, or C.

Oh well, I'll just wait and see.

In the same way that I closed Monday's episode, I will close this column by saying that fortune-telling, feng shui and lucky charms can be a source of entertainment and a forewarning of what might come, but ultimately God holds our destiny in His hands. We just need the strength to travel the journey He has set for us.

If we love Him and we have faith that God is good all the time, then there's absolutely nothing to fear.

RP is setting of international movie starring Joyce Jimenez and Japanese martial arts guru

"THE LORDS of Creation," an international movie which will star martial arts guru Genta Ogami and Filipina actress Joyce Jimenez is shooting in the Philippines.

"The Lords of Creation," which started Philippine filming on Jan. 29, will also have other local and foreign actors, under the direction of Filipino filmmaker Toto Natividad.

Fresh from the box-office success of "Balahibong Pusa," Joyce in "The Lords of Creation" plays the role of Maria, the daughter of Señor Alonso, who has sold everything he has, including her daughter, to Big Bill, an obnoxious capitalist.

Genta Ogami is in the male lead role as a Japanese martial arts expert who is tasked to fight evil and save Asia.

Ogami heads the G.O. Group, a private organization that aims to help in controlling the balance between economy and culture.

Much alarmed by the surrender and helplessness that have spread all over the world, including the Philippines, Ogami has come up with several philosophies to help ease the weakening foundations of society.

"My heart bleeds for those who are victims of an unjust society," says Ogami. "That is why I am doing my best to somehow make a difference in this world by promoting a new outlook in life, based on my philosophies."

It is in this light that he tapped the movies as a medium to relay his message to the world and he chose the Philippines to be the setting of the movie.

"The Philippines is a beautiful country," he says. "The people here are very kind and gentle. This movie will be one way of exploring the untapped possibilities you have in this country."

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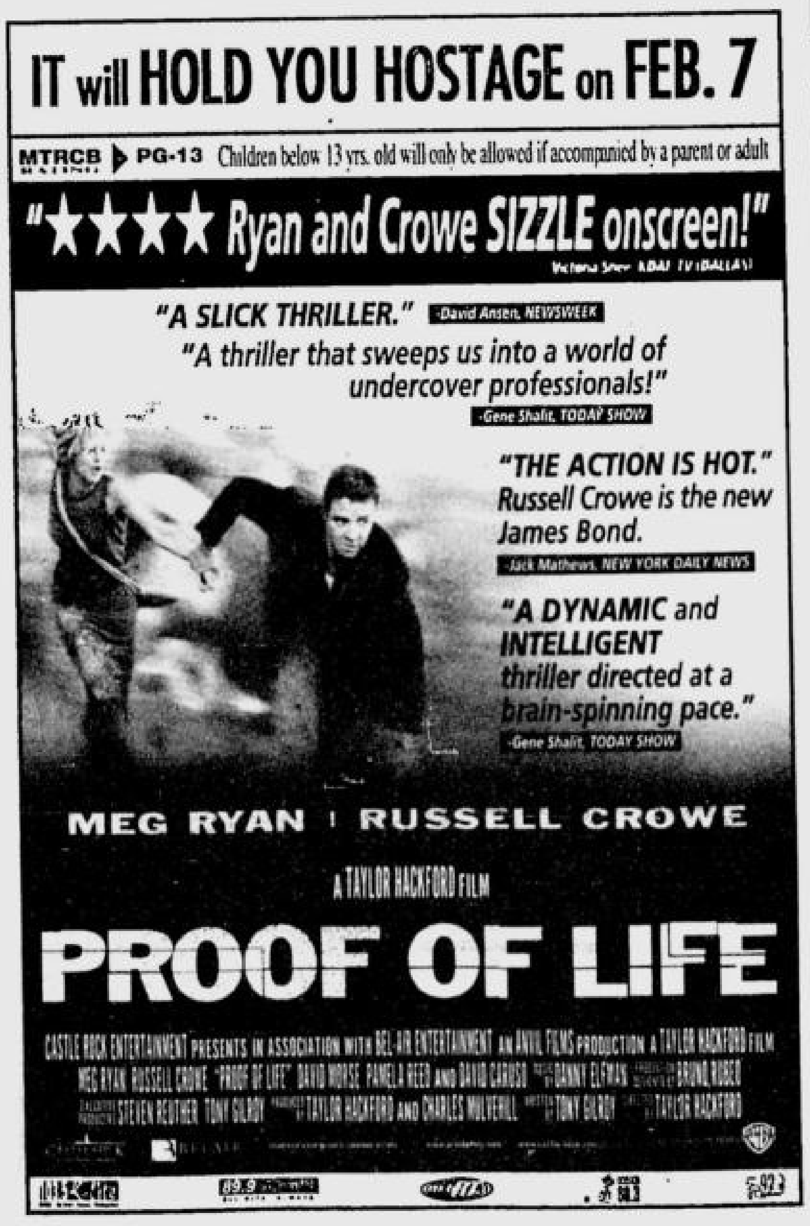

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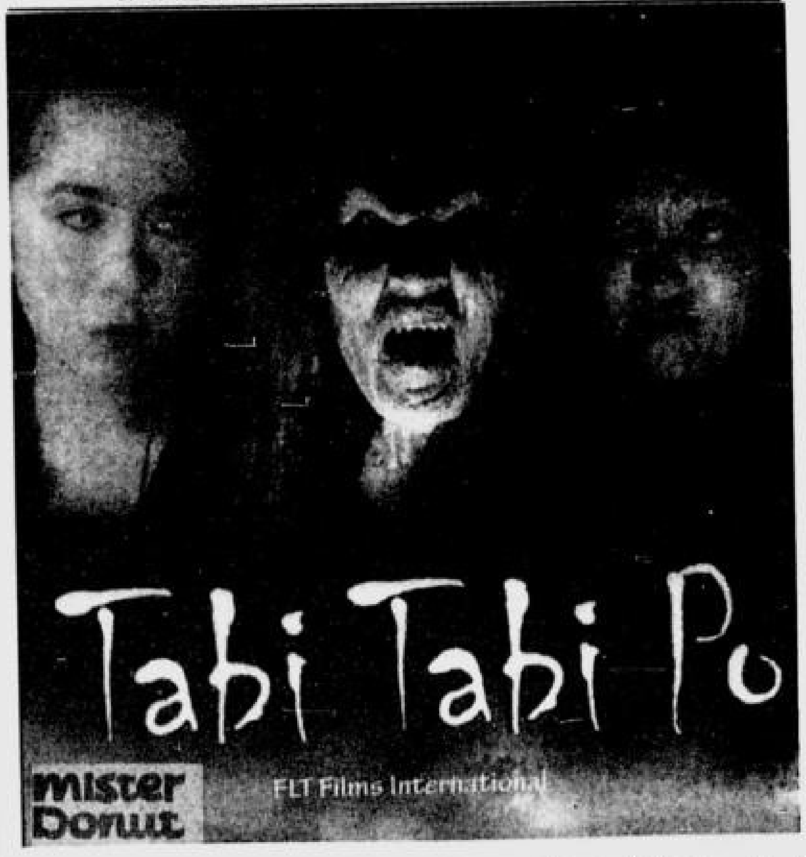

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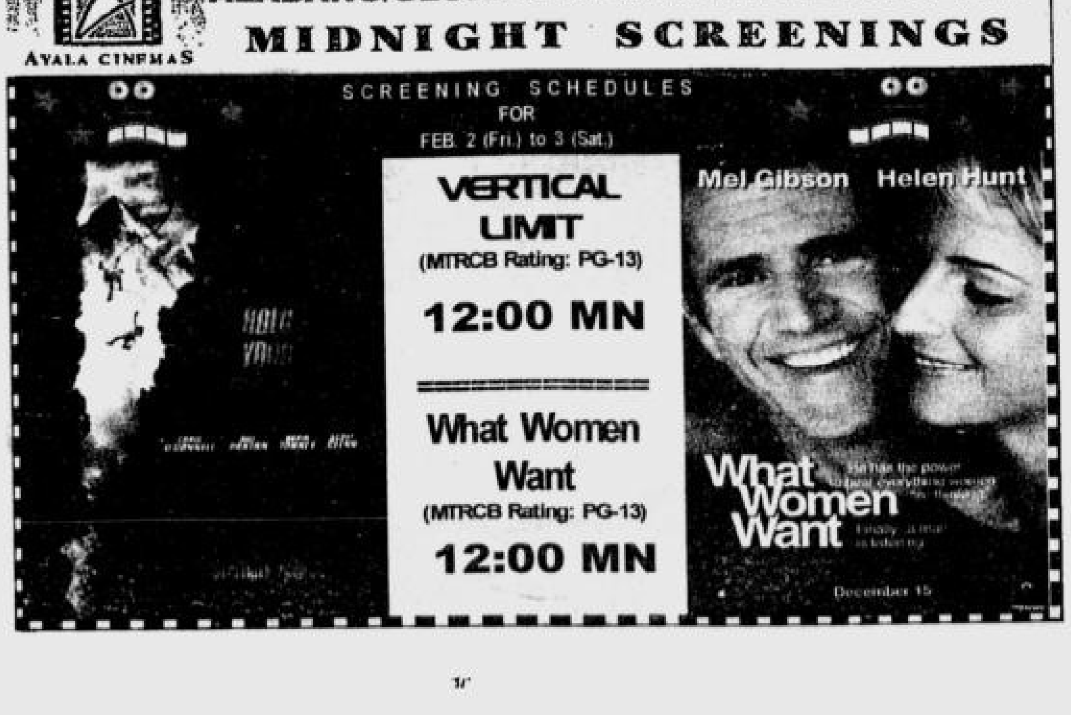

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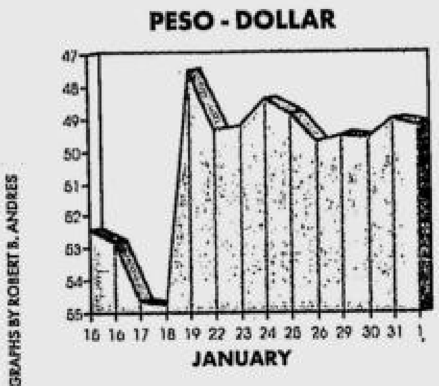


GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱49.16 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 1, 2001

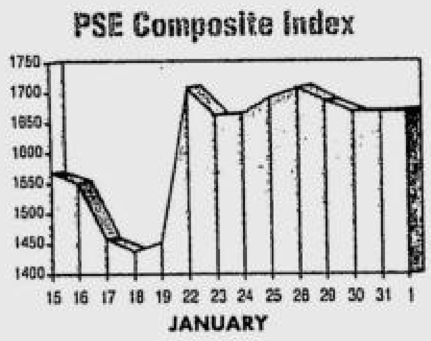
¥116.26 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.26 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 1, 2001

GOLD:$266.60/267.10 per ounce Hong Kong, Feb.1, 2001

Feb. 01, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.067350	1.000000	49.2210
Japan	Yen	0.009175	0.008596	0.4231
United Kingdom	Pound	1.563027	1.464400	72.0792
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.136858	0.128222	6.3112
Switzerland	Franc	0.652814	0.611621	30.1046
Canada	Dollar	0.712707	0.667735	32.8666
Singapore	Dollar	0.612363	0.573723	28.2392
Australia	Dollar	0.585426	0.548486	26.9970
Bahrain	Dinar	2.831317	2.652661	130.5666
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.284603	0.266645	13.1245
Brunei	Dollar	0.610263	0.571755	28.1424
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000106	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.025138	0.023552	1.1593
UAE	Dirham	0.290625	0.272287	13.4022
Korea	Won	0.000850	0.000796	0.0392
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.936900	46.1152
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.479029	23.5783
France	Franc	0.152450	0.142829	7.0302
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.425147	20.9262
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.068087	3.3513
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.023225	1.1432
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000484	0.0238
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.157575	7.7560
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004673	0.2300
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005631	0.2772
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.023225	1.1432
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.189618	58.5542

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks end down

STOCKS closed lower yesterday, with market players cashing in on previous day's gains made before the 50 basis points cuts in US and local rates.

"The rate cut in the US and here were in line with market expectations, so there was no reaction to that," said Juanis Barredo, analyst at Citisecurities Inc.

"I think the drop today is still part of the correction from last week's steep rise," he said.

Earlier yesterday, the central bank said it would cut its key overnight rates by 50 basis points after the US Fed announced a similar reduction in its rates.

The 33-share composite index fell 1.06 percent or 17.87 points to 1,669.13. It jumped 18.57 points or by 1.11 percent on Wednesday, after two consecutive days of declines.

Losers overwhelmed gainers 75 to 19 yesterday, while the prices of 37 issues were unchanged. Turnover thinned to P577.91 million from P1.16 billion on Wednesday.

Vincent Lazatin, fund manager at the GSIS Mutual Fund, which has P850 million in funds, also attributed the drop in local stocks yesterday "perhaps because of the statement made by (former) President Estrada."

Joseph Estrada, who was ousted in a popular revolt on Jan. 20, emerged from seclusion on Wednesday and declared to cheering supporters that he was still the president and that he would reclaim power. *Reuters*

Digitel allots $200M for capital spending

GOKONGWEI-OWNED Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc. has allotted $200 million for capital expenditures this year to fund its cellular phone business as well as its data and Internet initiatives.

Digitel senior vice president for corporate and legal affairs William Pamintuan yesterday said the company would launch its cellular phone service using the global system for mobile communications (GSM) by December this year. "We will have an initial capacity of 500,000 (subscribers)."

Lance Y. Gokongwei, one of Digitel's directors and executive vice president of its parent firm JG Summit Holdings Inc., also said yesterday during a press conference that Digitel invested $12 million in a joint venture that would connect the company and its customers to a global network for Internet, data and voice communications.

Bangko Sentral cuts key overnight rates

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday it would cut its benchmark interest rates by half a percentage point starting Monday and that further interest rate cuts would be considered carefully.

The fresh cuts would bring the overnight borrowing rate down to 11.5 percent and the lending rate to 13.75 percent. The move followed the US Federal Reserve's widely expected half-a-percentage-point cut in key interest rates on Wednesday.

US Federal Reserve policymakers cut their benchmark rate Wednesday by half a percentage point, citing the need for a quick response to the US economy's recent slide.

BUENAVENTURA

"This marks the fourth policy rate cut since the beginning of this year and brings the reduction in the BSP's policy rates to a cumulative total of 350 basis points since Dec. 4, 2000," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in a statement.

The BSP raised the key interest rates by four percentage points in October after the peso plunged because of the political crisis in which former President Joseph Estrada was accused of amassing illegal wealth while in office.

Buenaventura said the monetary authorities took into account a number of factors bearing on the future trend of inflation.

"In addition, the monetary easing bias of the US Fed as demonstrated by the successive 50-basis point cut in interest rates on Jan. 3 and 31, 2001, also provided room for a further cut in the BSP's policy rates," he said.

He also hinted further reductions might be in store, depending on where inflation is headed and further moves by the US Federal Reserve Board.

"The extent of policy rate cuts will be calibrated vis a vis developments in the financial and fiscal sectors," Buenaventura said.

"Further interest rate reductions would also be considered carefully with a view to observing an appropriate differential with foreign interest rates."

The central bank would also continue to monitor and assess the risks stemming from possible inflationary pressures coming from aggregate demand and supply conditions, he said.

The new administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo is hoping lower rates will help boost economic growth this year by making it easier for companies to borrow and invest.

Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas earlier said the government expects gross domestic product to expand between 3.8 percent and 4.3 percent in 2001 from 3.9 percent last year, one of the slowest rates in Asia. *With Inquirer wire reports*

Soros affiliate buys 18% stake in RP firm

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

NEXT Century Partners Ltd., a Singapore-Philippine investment fund affiliated with billionaire George Soros, has pumped in P300 million into Multimedia Telephony Inc., the country's pioneer wireless broadband provider run by a son of former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

The equity investment would give NCP an 18-percent share in Multimedia Telephony's venture Broadband Philippines with the Venecia group and Callahan Broadband Wireless Inc. retaining 40 percent each.

NCP executive Vincent Perez said the company chose MTI because of its wireless broadband technology (compared to its rivals' predominantly wired technology), which it believed would be the pervasive means of communication in the region.

In 1998, Soros chipped in $45 million into NCP for investments in the Philippines. It marked the controversial investor's first attempt to return to Asia following the region's financial crisis. Aside from Soros, NCP's other investors are PSA Corp., Edward Bass, Philippine National Bank, Mitsui and Co., and Security Bank. Its holdings include equity in Smart Communications, Fastech Synergy and Macondray and Co.

NCP chief technology officer Roland R. Benzon said wireless broadband technology was more economical, more efficient, and more environment friendly than the ongoing strategy of traditional telecommunication players who offer broadband services using their existing phone lines and cable network.

Broadband Philippines uses the Local Multipoint Distribution System (LDMS) technology and equipment provided by Nortel Networks which transmits data, voice, video and Internet access via microwave frequencies using a network linked through rooftop antennas, hubs and cabling.

Broadband Philippines chair and CEO Jose Perez de Venecia III said the company was spending $75 million for the first phase of its project, with $25 million budgeted for this year. The capital expenditure program would be financed through a combination of equity infusion and debt.

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PLDT cuts overseas direct dial call rate

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co., the country's dominant phone carrier, said yesterday it was reducing its international long distance direct dial charges to all countries to 40 US cents any time of the day, effective Thursday.

Previously, the PLDT charged a 49.59-cents-per-minute IDD rate on weekends and late evenings and 69 cents at peak hours or for calls made in the morning to early evening.

"Starting from today, PLDT's international long distance direct dial rate to all countries will be 40 US cents per minute anytime of the day, any day of the week—overseas communications tax inclusive," the company said in a statement.

PLDT shares closed up P5 at P920 per share.

PLDT's IDD charges will now be at par with those of Globe Telecom Inc., the country's largest provider of digital mobile phone services.

PLDT senior vice president Claro Ramirez said the latest cut would help the company sustain the growth in the volume of IDD calls it witnessed after reducing charges in June last year.

Another telecom firm, Nextel Communications Philippines Inc., is also cutting its IDD access rates to any country to 25 US cents per minute, the lowest ever offered by the industry, for a period of one month.

Reuters, Bloomberg

GMA appoints Napocor chief

By Christine A. Gaylican

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has named energy industry veteran Jesus Alcordo as president of the National Power Corp. despite fears expressed by some quarters that there may be a conflict of interest in his appointment.

Alcordo was first appointed as energy secretary, but he declined on account of his shareholdings in East Asia Power Corp. He resigned on Wednesday as president and chief executive of the company upon receiving his appointment papers as Napocor president.

Alcordo is also a board member of Chemical Industries of the Philippines Inc. It was not known whether he also gave up this seat.

Alcordo founded East Asia Power, a company involved in building and managing power barges, to help solve an energy crisis that gripped the country in the early 1990s.

One of East Asia Power's customers is utility giant Manila Electric Co., a firm run by the Lopez group.

There have been concerns over Alcordo's appointment as Napocor president as East Asia Power has been claiming from the state-run power firm some $600,000 in contract obligations.

Industry sources said Alcordo, a native of Cebu, was appointed because of his close ties with former Cebu Gov. Lito Osmeña and his associations with the Aboitiz family.

Alcordo served as president of the William, Gothong and Aboitiz Shipping Lines in 1998.

Alcordo reported for work as Napocor president yesterday and immediately met with officials of the company to familiarize himself with the structure of the organization.

Alcordo declined last week his appointment as energy secretary because his position then at East Asia Power violated the law that created the Department of Energy.

Section 8 of Republic Act 7638 creating the Department of Energy barred any officer, external auditor, accountant or counsel of any private company primarily engaged in the energy industry from serving as energy secretary within two years from his retirement or resignation.

An East Asia Power official said Alcordo declined his appointment as energy secretary to steer clear of problems he might encounter with Congress, which would have to confirm his appointment.

As Napocor president, Alcordo would not need congressional confirmation.

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GMA's appointments and disappointments

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

EVERYTIME President GMA appoints, she also disappoints. The disappointed often outnumbers the appointed. That is the good and the bad news that every head of state and of government has to face and must explain to the people. Faced with the tremendous responsibility of rebuilding the nation, of healing the wounds of divisions and conflicts and of moving the economy forward, GMA has to walk on a tightrope trying to maintain balance and equilibrium among various conflicting forces around her. If she goes wrong, and seriously wrong at that, she may start an upheaval that can cause the collapse of her precariously established government. Thus, we should help her. But she should help herself first.

Like US President George W. Bush, President GMA's first crucial challenge to surmount is the choice of her Few Good Men, her Knights of the Round Table, her disciples, so to say. John Maxwell, in his four-time bestseller "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership," wrote that the 11th law is the Law of the Inner Circle, and that every leader's potential is determined by the people closest to him. Jack Welch, chair and CEO of GE, didn't delegate the choice of 500 general managers worldwide. He anointed each one based on short lists made by his high caliber selection committee. GMA seems she is not in control.

Politics over professionalism

From the HR point of view, the appointments made by GMA were more political than professional. While we have to admit that politics is a reality that every president cannot simply ignore, given the highly delicate task of pleasing all major players that catapulted her to power, GMA should adhere to her well-formulated qualification standards of competence, dedication and integrity. She should listen to her search committee's analysis and recommendations otherwise it might appear as a mere deodorizer of political concessions. We can only help her if she remains faithful to her mandate.

No matter what you say about Marcos but he lasted 20 years mainly due to the world-class executives he recruited. Top guns like Romulo, Virata, O.D., Laya, Sicat and Ongpin who had no political agenda but brought honors to the government. GMA's dad too had Salas, Hechanova and Peralta. In contrast, GMA's choices, except for Romulo, Roxas and Gordon, do not appear to measure up to her own demanding standards of competence, dedication and integrity. This is very unfortunate and, this early, we have to make this wake-up call.

Promised but undelivered

The first fatal flaw of the new leadership was that GMA raised the people's expectations too high. In Edsa II, she pledged her 4-core beliefs and in swearing in her new Cabinet, she required them to sign a covenant of moral compass. But the quality of her appointees may not meet the standards she promised. If this trend continues, she might as well prepare for Edsa III. She put in place a search committee composed of highly respected career executive service officers. Thus, decent citizens expected that this time, the really qualified prospects would be chosen. But it now appears that political pressures are stronger than merit and fitness.

Of course, we concede that running a country is much more complicated than managing a business conglomerate. But then again, GMA should have told the truth that she could not resist the pressures coming from political blocks, especially now that she is looking forward to her candidacy in 2004. Her core beliefs and moral compass will turn out to be high sounding sloganeering that cannot be translated into concrete actions because she is not completely in control.

The Roy Señeres rebuff

One distinguished prospect who showed rare guts is former Ambassador Roy Señeres of the NLRC. He rejected an offer to be the labor secretary not because he doesn't like the post. He is a homegrown Dole career professional since the 1970s under the tutelage of Ople and Inciong. And he is well-loved by Dole insiders as well as both labor and management. But he found that his prospective peers in the Cabinet "have very bad public image," referring to Mendoza and Abadia.

While others are pulling strings, peddling influence and kissing asses, Señeres showed character by refusing to work with tainted personalities. Others would even sell or mortgage their souls to the devil just to land in the Cabinet but Roy displayed *delicadeza*. He has nothing personal against Mendoza and Abadia but Señeres doesn't want GMA's presidency to be weakened by negative images. In the US, Bush's nominee for labor secretary gracefully withdrew when someone raised the issue of her employing a domestic who was an undocumented alien.

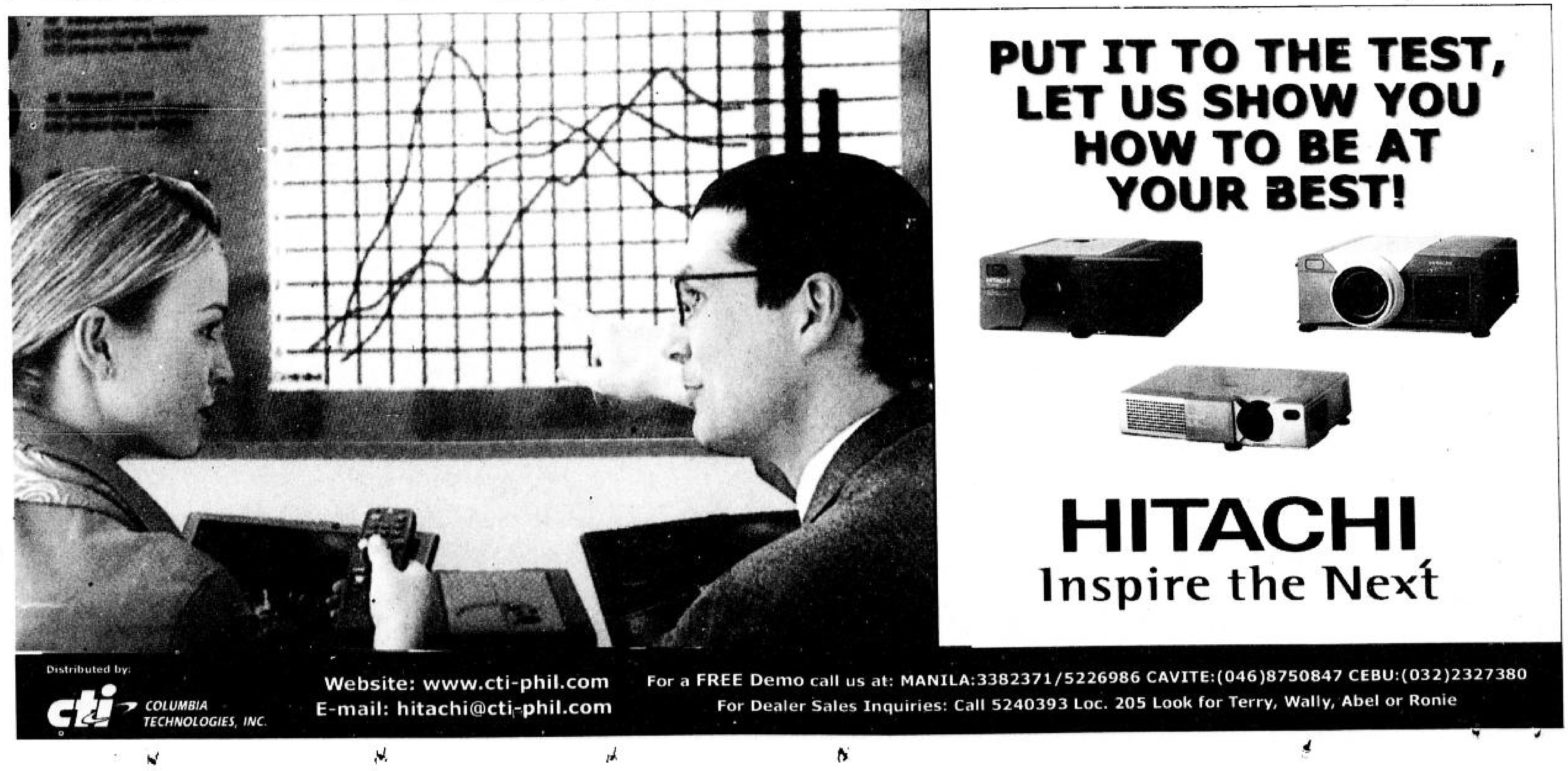
Political suicide

If the politician in GMA has already prevailed over the moral leader in her, she should better become an astute one, instead of committing serious blunders. In Cebu, for one, she is being manipulated by the clever Lito Osmeña whose Promdi, her erstwhile political tormentor, now enjoys GMA's favors over Alayon, the group that made Gloria won over Cebu's own Serge III in 1998. The appointment of Promdi boys Garcia and Dumon, and the virtual abandonment of Alayon means GMA will lose in Cebu by a million votes in 2004. Her probable rival for the presidency is no other than Lito, the apple of her eye today.

GMA has alienated her loyal leaders in Cebu such as Gullas of District I; Kintanar, District II; Yapha of District III; Durano of District V, and incumbent Governor Celeste as well as Tomas Osmeña, the come-backing Cebu City mayor, brother of Serge. GMA is losing quality friends in Cebu.

Unsolicited advice

If GMA wanted to become a good president, she should start calling the shots and stop listening to "trapos." After all, she is the one who'll answer to the Filipino people. The people and not the politicians will be her ultimate judge. After all, they were the ones who made her President. They will be the ones to oust her too if she strays. It is as plain and simple as that.



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NOODLE-MAKING VENTURE

RFM ties up with Taiwan firm

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. will enter into a joint venture with the Uni-President group, Taiwan's biggest retail group, to put up a food manufacturing business in the country.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, RFM assistant corporate secretary Cristina Reyes said the joint venture will be 65-percent owned by Uni-President Enterprises and 35 percent by RFM. It will engage primarily in noodles manufacturing.

Reyes said the details of the deal would be announced as soon as the agreement was finalized.

Bullish on the Philippines, Uni-President was the first foreign group to enter the local retail sector after its liberalization. The Taiwanese company acquired a majority stake in the 7-Eleven convenience store chain.

Aside from retailing, the President group also has manufacturing interests in Taiwan. The Taiwanese group had said it was eyeing a possible partnership with two local companies engaged in the food manufacturing business.

The Uni-President group also wants to venture into the beverage business here. It said it wanted to take the majority control of any business it would pursue in the Philippines.

The Uni-President group had long wanted to invest in the country but the Asian financial crisis delayed its offshore expansion plans.

Aside from the Philippines, the Uni-President group has existing investments in Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and China, where it is the biggest Taiwanese investor with more than 30 factories and 72,000 employees. It is planning to set up operations in Malaysia.

President Chain Store, which is listed in the Taiwan Stock Exchange, is Taiwan's pioneer in the C-store business. It is now the country's leading retailer with over 2,500 stores. It recorded operating revenues of $1.6 billion in 1999.

While President Chain's core business is the convenience store, it has successfully diversified into other retailing formats. It operates Cosmed, a homegrown health and beauty chain of 50 stores, and President Coffee Corp., a joint venture with Starbucks US with 45 outlets in Taiwan. It recently went overseas through the opening of Starbucks in Shanghai.

PDIC asks SEC to defer action on Urbancorp

By Elena R. Torrijos

STATE-OWNED Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to defer action on Urbancorp Investments Inc.

This was in view of UII interim receiver Corazon de la Paz's recommendation that creditors of the failed investment house be paid interests on their exposure.

PDIC said it was seeking a deferral of the SEC action on UII in the interest of parity among creditors of UII and depositors of Urban Bank Inc., which owns 40 percent of the investment house.

PDIC noted that under a proposed rehabilitation plan calling for a merger of UBI, UII and Bank of Commerce, UBI depositors and creditors will not be paid interests in the duration of the relief period granted to UII.

UII was granted last June a relief from payment of its liabilities P5.83 billion.

However, PDIC said the UII interim receiver should identify the transactions that precipitated the runs on UII in her report. It also questioned the September draft progress report of De la Paz stating that UII sold P2.824 billion in loans to UBI inclusive of accrued interest.

DTI urges foreign retailers to take second look at RP

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TRADE Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II is hoping to spark foreign investor interest in the retailing trade sector which has not been able to attract big names nearly a year after Congress opened the sector to foreign investors.

Roxas told reporters that among his top priority in his second tour of duty at the Department of Trade and Industry (he resigned from the Estrada Cabinet last November) was to woo back foreign retailers that have been spooked by the then worsening political crisis in the country.

Roxas said he would try to bring back the two major French retailers— Casino and Carrefour—to take a second look at the Philippines with the new administration.

Casino was close to taking over the Uniwide group last year but the spate of bombings in Metro Manila on Dec. 30 forced the French retailer to abandon its plan at the last minute. The political crisis also forced Carrefour to break off discussions with the Rustan group of the Tantoco family for a joint venture.

Although he admitted that it would take at least six months before foreign investors would be coming back to the Philippines, Roxas said the government should start as soon as possible to send the message that we have a new-found energy with the change in administration.

Aside from Casino and Carrefour, Roxas is also expected to touch base with other foreign retailers that have expressed interest in the country such as Seiyu of Japan, Europe-based A-Hold, Hong Kong-based Well-Come, and American retailer JC Penney.

There are some signs that foreign retailers are starting to form a beeline to the country. Wal-Mart has renewed its bid to establish a presence in the country. PriceSmart Inc. of the US recently signed up with Fort Bonifacio Development Corp for the opening of its 6th Asian warehouse at the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

SMC board OKs plan to take over Coke

THE 14-MEMBER board of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. yesterday approved the company's bid to takeover the majority control of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. as packaged by financial adviser ABN Amro Bank.

In a press briefing after a special SMC board meeting, company SVP Alberto Manlapit said the board had authorized the SMC management to negotiate and sign a deal with Coca-Cola Amatil Ltd. (CCA) of Australia, the controlling shareholder of CCBPI.

Manlapit said it was the first time that the SMC board had discussed the proposed reacquisition of CCBPI. With the board's blessing, he said SMC could now start the due diligence audit on the company, which might take four weeks. Once finalized, the deal will enable SMC to make a strong comeback in the soft drink industry.

But the SMC spokesperson said the company will not give details on the proposed deal until CCA accepts the offer. He said the independent directors of CCA—excluding the representatives from SMC and Atlanta-based Coca-Cola Corp.—will meet on Feb. 6 to discuss the package.

Earlier reports indicated that the deal, estimated to be worth $1.2 billion, will enable SMC to get 65-percent control of CCBPI while Coke Atlanta will end up with 35 percent. CCA, for its part, is expected to get a minority stake in La Tondeña Distillers Inc., SMC's beverage subsidiary.

Manlapit said SMC was confident that the independent CCA board would agree to give up CCBPI despite the fact that the Philippines is its biggest market.

He said CCA, in its board meeting on Feb. 6, is expected to arrive at a "make or break" decision.

"The deal is good for both the CCA and San Miguel. And the fact that this deal involves Coke Atlanta is a vote of confidence in the Philippine economy of one of the most recognized brand names in the world." he said.

Coca-Cola Atlanta owns 37 percent of CCA while SMC owns 21.5 percent of the Australian company. In 1997, former San Miguel Corp. chair Andres Soriano III swapped SMC's 70-percent equity in CCBPI for the 21.6-percent interest in CCA.

Manlapat said ABN Amro yesterday held a 30-minute presentation on the takeover package, including the resulting structures and the valuations, which had convinced the board of the merit of the proposal.

The recent change in the SMC board did not affect the company's plan to take over CCBPI. Two new board members Vitaliano Nanagas and Winston Garcia were elected to the SMC board to represent government pension funds Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System, respectively. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Japan to approve loan for SBMA, CDC plan

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—The Japanese government is expected to approve a $425-million loan package that will fund the 92-km Subic-Clark-Tarlac toll highway linking the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales and the Clark International Airport in Pampanga.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo said the signing of the loan agreement was put off at the height of the political crisis that rocked former President Estrada's administration.

Payumo said the highway project would be the second SBMA-initiated proposal to be financed under the Obuchi Fund.

The first was the Subic port development to be financed by Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) through a 16.45-billion special yen loan package granted in August last year.

"The loan is high in the JBIC priority list for funding since the Subic-Clark-Tarlac road project is complementary to the Subic port (project)," Payumo told the INQUIRER.

The Subic port development aims to turn the freeport into a major transshipment hub not only in Central Luzon but also in the Asia-Pacific region.

The master plan provides for the development of a world-class expanded bulk and container port at the Leyte Wharf in the Cubi Point area, which can handle up to 600,000 TEUs (twenty equivalent units) annually.

Payumo said the Subic-Clark-Tarlac toll highway would complement the port infrastructure.

The planned highway will create a dedicated transportation corridor between the two zones, cutting down travel time between Subic and Clark from two hours to only 30 minutes.

The highway would also provide producers and exporters from Central and Northern Luzon easier access to Subic port.

On the map, the 92-km highway looks like a straight line that starts from the former Clark Air Base and goes straight to the former United States Naval Base, linking up with the Rizal-Argonaut Highway that leads to Subic's port facilities.

The Rizal-Argonaut Highway is a 2.4-km major road artery inside the freeport which is undergoing expansion into a 9.8-km four-lane highway.

The SBMA expects that the Subic-Clark segment of the tollway will be completed in 2004.

The tollway is one of the projects under the Subic-Clark Alliance designed to increase efficiency in land, sea and air transportation between Clark and Subic.

Th project will benefit producers, exporters and other businesses in both economic zones and spur economic activity in the corridor.

The Subic port development plan and the Subic-Clark-Tarlac tollway are based on the Central Luzon Development Plan, drafted by an inter-agency team which included President Macapagal-Arroyo when she was trade undersecretary and Payumo, who was then Bataan congressman. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Top 20 listed firms by market capitalization

(end 2000)

Rank 2000	Rank 1999		Share Price	Market Capital (in P-billion)
1	1	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,530.0	766.5
2	-	Sun Life Financial	1,280.0	512.2
3	2	PLDT	865.0	145.7
4	5	San Miguel Corp.	48.5	113.9
5	4	Ayala Corp.	7.7	110.0
6	3	BPI	58.0	91.9
7	7	Metrobank	163.0	59.8
8	6	Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	57.7
9	9	SM Prime Holdings	5.8	57.6
10	8	Meralco	49.0	50.0
11	14	Globe Telecom	700.0	46.7
12	10	Equitable-PCI Bank	59.0	42.9
13	13	ABS-CBN Broadcasting	49.5	38.6
14	11	PNB	38.0	23.9
15	21	Alliance Global Group	13.3	21.5
16	19	Union Bank	34.0	18.7
17	16	Tanduay Holdings	5.5	17.9
18	23	China Bank	750.0	17.3
19	17	Benpres Holdings	2.9	13.3
20	18	JG Summit Holdings	2.1	12.9

Source: Technistock

At the end of year 2000, blue chips San Miguel Corp., Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Ayala Land and Meralco landed in the top 10 listed companies in terms of market capitalization. PLDT dropped from the second slot to third as newly-listed Sunlife Financial occupied the slot with the second highest capitalization. Dropping from the top 20 were Petron (21st), Metro Pacific (22nd) and Fairmont which is the former BW Resources (79th).

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

DISCLOSURES

RFM Corp. has amended the conversion price of its preferred shares from P4.68 per share to P2 per share. Instead of one common share for every one preferred share, the new conversion ratio is 2.34 common share for every one preferred share.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Central Azucarera de Tarlac** were Pedro Cojuangco, Josephine Reyes, Jose Cojuangco Jr., Georg Weber-Hoehl; Ernesto Teopaco, Teresita Lopa and Fulgencio Factoran Jr.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Philippine National Bank** elected Virgilio Panlilio as director to fill up the lone vacancy in the bank's board of directors.

* * *

ACESITE Hotel Corp. announced the resignation of Gerry Wai as director of the company. Elected to replace him was Fu Liang, who also succeeds P.H. Yu as the chair of the board. Yu remains a director of the company.

* * *

FIRST Metro Investment Corp. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Feb. 15, 4:30 p.m. at the 2nd Floor, Metrobank Auditorium, Metrobank Plaza in Makati. Stockholders of record as of Jan. 8 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

DIGITEL Telecommunications Phils. Inc. announced its joint venture with Asia Global Crossing and Broadbank Infrastructure Group to form Digitel Crossing, which will establish a terrestrial fiber optic backhaul network in the country. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of February 1, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	131.0	131	131	131	300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	71.00	71	70	70	245,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	57.50	57.5	57	57	12,000
First E-Bank Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	20,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	235.0	236	234	236	46,480
Philippine National Bank	32.00	32	31.5	31.5	75,700
Phil. Savings Bank	24.00	29	24	28	11,200
Security Bank Corp.	26.50	26.5	26.5	26.5	1,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	32.00	32	32	32	7,600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.64	142,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1290	1290	5,030
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.30	1.3	1.3	1.3	100,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1090	1115	1090	1110	11,810
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	48.00	48	47.5	47.5	23,500
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.6300	.63	.6	.6	2,350,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	720.0	720	720	720	30
Island Info and Tech Inc.	.0675	.0675	.06	.06	10,600,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.85	3.95	3.85	3.95	86,000
Piltel	.7000	.7	.68	.68	310,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	910.0	920	910	920	29,650
Ivantage Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	470,000
Philweb.com Inc.	.0875	.0875	.08	.0825	363,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "A"	54.50	55	53	53	16,900
Manila Electric Co. "B"	59.00	59.5	57.5	58	1,193,300
Petron Corp.	1.94	1.96	1.86	1.86	5,828,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l SV	1.48	1.48	1.34	1.36	8,914,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	.5500	.58	.51	.58	240,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	20,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	.1800	.18	.18	.18	100,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	.2500	.25	.22	.22	160,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	.5700	.57	.53	.55	3,210,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	.1550	.155	.155	.155	30,000
Republic Cement Corp.	.3500	.35	.35	.35	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	.8200	.82	.8	.81	550,000
Union Cement Corp.	.7300	.75	.73	.75	3,830,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.40	2.4	2.4	2.4	10,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.50	11.75	11.25	11.5	247,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	36.50	36.5	35	35	139,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.60	1.6	1.58	1.58	62,000
RFM Corp.	1.08	1.22	1.08	1.12	9,216,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	49.50	50	49.5	50	114,500
San Miguel Corp. "B"	62.50	62.5	62	62.5	598,400
Universal Robina Corp.	6.10	6.1	6.1	6.1	51,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.00	10	10	10	2,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg "A"	.5600	.56	.55	.55	50,000
Ayala Corp.	8.30	8.4	8.2	8.2	2,376,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	.2700	.28	.27	.27	360,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	119,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.5	12	12.25	3,700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.04	1.1	700,000
APC Group Inc.	.2100	.21	.2	.21	700,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.50	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	.3200	.32	.32	.32	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.10	3.1	3	3.05	1,429,000
Crown Equities Inc.	.2500	.25	.25	.25	10,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.6400	.64	.59	.59	2,530,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	.1700	.17	.16	.17	1,400,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	1.80	1.8	1.8	1.8	5,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.30	1.3	1.18	1.18	6,191,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.5	19,300
Forum Pacific Inc.	.3400	.34	.34	.34	430,000
Global Equities Inc.	.3600	.36	.36	.36	760,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	.3000	.3	.3	.3	200,000
House of Investments Inc.	.9200	.92	.92	.92	10,000
Ionics Inc.	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	173,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.00	1	1	1	30,000
Ipeople Inc. "B"	.9000	1	.9	1	40,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.60	2.6	2.55	2.6	3,529,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	74,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	.0180	.018	.018	.018	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "B"	.0180	.022	.017	.017	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.00	1	.94	.95	11,290,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.6900	.72	.65	.65	6,170,000
Solid Group Inc.	.7100	.74	.7	.74	1,070,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	6.00	6	6	6	5,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	.4300	.43	.4	.4	4,100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	.3900	.39	.3	.3	1,920,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	.7000	.7	.7	.7	50,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	20,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.50	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
Music Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	265,000
Picop Resources Inc.	.1500	.15	.15	.15	2,730,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	.9500	.95	.95	.95	40,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.00	11	11	11	195,500
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.7400	.74	.7	.71	2,160,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.7600	.76	.69	.69	6,440,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.6000	.6	.58	.58	910,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	.3800	.38	.36	.37	610,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	48.00	48	48	48	162,700
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.50	3.5	3.5	3.5	6,000
Globe Tel. "A"-Warrants	520.0	520	520	520	100
Jollibee Warrants	11.00	11	10.75	10.75	226,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0034	.0034	.0034	.0034	115,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.50	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.50	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	6,100
Waterfront Phils.-Warrant	.1000	.1	.09	.09	300,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.80	6.8	6.6	6.6	8,948,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	.4100	.41	.41	.41	1,050,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.3600	.36	.34	.35	9,840,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	.5100	.51	.5	.5	970,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.4800	.48	.43	.46	29,740,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.70	1.7	1.7	1.7	5,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.70	2.8	2.46	2.5	13,002,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	.2000	.2	.2	.2	290,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	.4700	.47	.44	.45	970,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	.4100	.41	.39	.4	800,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.10	2.1	2.1	2.1	176,000
Phil. Realty and Holdings	.1800	.18	.18	.18	200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.00	7.1	6.9	7	14,154,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	.1300	.14	.12	.13	12,160,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	.0070	.007	.007	.007	28,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0075	.0075	.007	.007	18,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	30,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min. & Dev't.	1.70	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	6.30	6.3	5	5	46,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "A"	.0210	.021	.02	.02	3,300,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "B"	.0220	.022	.022	.022	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "A"	.2000	.22	.195	.22	400,000
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0070	.007	.0065	.0065	21,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0065	.0065	.0065	.0065	6,000,000
Omico Corp.	.0050	.005	.0048	.0048	167,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	.0200	.02	.02	.02	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. "B"	.2400	.24	.24	.24	100,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	.2000	.2	.2	.2	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	.0310	.031	.03	.03	11,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	40,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "B"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	5,000,000
Pacifica	.0200	.02	.019	.019	14,100,000
Sinophil Corp.	.1050	.115	.105	.115	490,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	.2600	.26	.25	.25	740,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	678,920	51,872,370.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	590,884,280	332,935,470.00
PRO	92,305,000	213,098,750.00
Mining	276,366,000	1,952,800.00
OIL	71,730,000	1,113,300.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,031,964,200	600,972,690.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	623.60	DOWN12.82
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,288.89	DOWN21.26
PRO	633.24	DOWN13.98
Mining	1,364.38	DOWN 3.62
OIL	2.10	DOWN 0.09
All Shares Index	811.35	DOWN 5.21
Composite	1,669.13	DOWN17.87

NO. OF ADVANCES: 19; NO. OF DECLINES: 75; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 37; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 131; NO. OF TRADES: 4,312

Backdoor entry

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

AN ADDED bonus to PLDT's majority acquisition of GMA-7, should the two parties finally come to terms with the billions in difference in asked and bid prices, is that PLDT boss Manuel V. Pangilinan would finally gain a backdoor entry into the INQUIRER.

As you know, GMA and this paper are 50-50 partners to the www.inq7.net, the Internet venture of the INQUIRER and GMA's Channel 7 and its dzBB radio network.

(Despite www.inq7.net, the INQUIRER still maintains its original www.inquirer.net website.)

With GMA in his palm, Pangilinan would finally gain indirect equity into the INQUIRER and still safely skirt the constitutional prohibition on tri-media ownership.

This would be so because what Pangilinan would be buying into is the electronic and even incomplete version of INQUIRER the newspaper, not the newspaper company itself.

Pangilinan had actually gained a foothold within the old-technology INQUIRER during the paper's early years when his First Pacific Finance provided a loan-with-equity conversion option.

But First Pacific decided not to exercise that option after encountering steady shellackings from jukebox congressmen and columnists warning about "Suharto/Indonesian crony" money buying into the local media.

That was a dozen years and rotary-dial phones ago.

Now with foreign news programs, newspapers, and magazines beaming round-the-clock through the bedroom cable TV and the digital telephone lines, the constitutional prohibitions on tri-media and foreign ownership have been technologically leapfrogged.

Something old, something new

- PRESIDENTIAL assistant Paul Dominguez is the incoming chair of Development Bank of the Philippines, with Remedios Macalincag likely to be retained as CEO.

Over at Landbank, it looks like former congressman Gary Teves is secure in his perch.

- ISABEL Golamco, appointments secretary of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo when she was still Vice President, has been appointed director and advance party of the new board of Meco, the country's de facto embassy to Taiwan.

- JV BAUTISTA, the fallen Lenin of Bayan, has resurrected with Sanlakas' Anti-Trapo Movement after serving as longtime counsel of the Joson political dynasty in Nueva Ecija.

- OF THE five undersecretaries at the finance department, only Cornelio Gison has so far been asked to stay on.

Former Finance Undersecretary Milwida Guevarra, who is now with Ford Foundation, has been invited to rejoin the department, a poetic justice considering that the career executive had been dumped by the Estrada administration.

- ING BARINGS on Tuesday held a dinner for GMA at the former Forbes Park home of now regional chief executive Renato de Guzman, with a who's-who list of bankers and businessmen in attendance.

What was refreshing was that the new President, in contrast with you-know-who, arrived even before the 7:30 p.m. cocktails.

Dinner was promptly served at 8 p.m. and it was good-bye time by 9 p.m.

Post-Eraptions

- JUST in case you missed it, while the major networks were showing Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo holding the historic press conference at the Edsa Shrine with the just-defected DND/AFP leadership, the government's PTV-4 was still showing a live broadcast of Erap loyalists massed at Mendiola dancing to the tune of, we are not kidding, Tom Jones' "Sex Bomb."

- LUXURY Swiss watchmaker Patek-Philippe has decided to merge its local operations with Seiko of Japan. The two watchmakers have also decided to appoint Miriam Defensor-Santiago as image model for their new company, Seiko-Patek.

Short takes

- DUE to global realignment, Agatep and Associates will lose the estimated P100-million/year Philips account after the Dutch electronics giant decided to transfer worldwide advertising business to DDB-Needham from Euro RSCG, Agatep's foreign partner.

- THANKS to a weaker yen, the 2001 Civic that Honda will introduce today should cost about the same as last year's Civic. This means the prices would range anywhere from the P663,000 for the 1.5-liter version to P804,000 for 1.6-liter Sir/Vtis model.

Heard through the grapevine

TO THOSE who wield big brooms at the GSIS, the key parties to talk to about the multibillion reinsurance business of the government are insurance middleman "Boy" Mijares, Jardine Aboitiz Insurance Brokers, a secretary named Sally, and a golfer named Joey Stevens.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

3 foreign firms to oversee gov't bond flotation

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

FOREIGN investment banks Chase Manhattan, JP Morgan and Morgan Stanley yesterday urged the government to hold an international roadshow and take advantage of potential investor interest for its planned $400-million bond flotation within the first quarter.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo attended the presentation of the investment banks which, according to him, offered an integrated proposal to the government.

This means the three would end up cornering the underwriting task for the sovereign borrowing, a possibility that is already eliciting sour responses from its competitors.

Also present in the meeting aside from the heads and representatives from the three firms were Sergio Edeza, the national treasurer-in-waiting, former Finance Undersecretary Romeo Bernardo, and former Monetary Board member Cayetano Paderanga Jr.

"They said we must do a roadshow and present the new economic team to the international community. We will do this possibly within the first quarter," Romulo said.

He admitted that the roadshow would be a take-off for a borrowing to finance this year's deficit, which he estimated at between P130 billion and P145 billion.

"Obviously, if you have a budget deficit you have to support it and we would do this by borrowing abroad, borrowing locally or doing both," the finance chief said.

Romulo, who signified an aversion to borrowing in his first few days in office, later acknowledged that a government facing a huge budget gap had no choice but to borrow.

He said the government intends to prioritize domestic borrowings rather than foreign. "We have to refine the borrowing mix. We also have to raise taxes and campaign intensively for that," Romulo said.

Sources, however, said the government was already starting on the wrong foot as some investment banks have voiced displeasure on how "people close to the new government could corner important projects and deals" like a government borrowing.

The market is also being kept in suspense as to who would be the national treasurer. Romulo declined to officially announce Edeza's appointment.

Romulo said he had asked the under-secretaries, including National Treasurer Leonor Briones, to stay on board even as they have submitted courtesy resignations.

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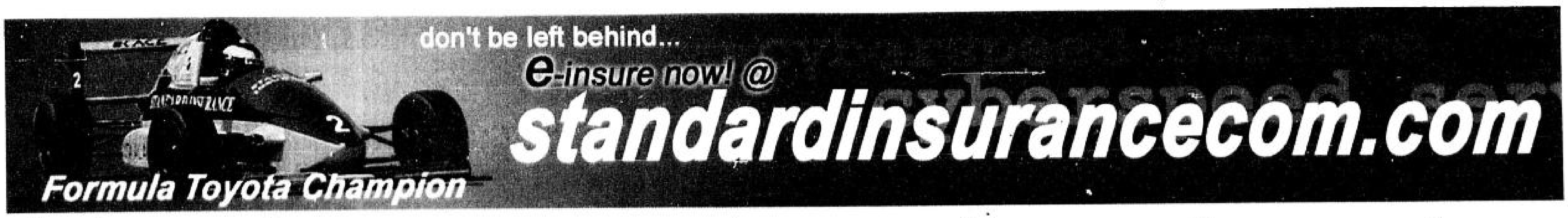

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REVIVING US ECONOMY

Fed cuts interest rates, hints more to come

WASHINGTON—The Federal Reserve on Wednesday slashed short-term interest rates by another half a point in a fresh bid to breathe new life into an economy gasping for air.

Warning of continued weakness in US growth, the Fed's policymaking Open Market Committee, after a two-day meeting here, left open the possibility of further rate cuts this year.

The committee lowered its benchmark federal funds rate from 6 to 5.5 percent, matching the half point cut it approved on Jan. 3 in a surprise move between regularly scheduled meetings.

The rate is a target figure used by banks making overnight loans among themselves. The committee also lowered the largely symbolic discount rate, which the Fed charges member banks that borrow, by half a point to 5 percent.

Committee members under the leadership of Fed Chair Alan Greenspan said in a communiqué that, in the near term, "the risks are weighted mainly toward conditions that may generate economic weakness in the foreseeable future."

"Given that statement, more easing obviously lies ahead," predicted Merrill Lynch chief economist Bruce Steinberg, adding a prediction that the committee would bring the federal funds rate down to 4.75 percent by mid-year.

"The Fed will do whatever it takes to prevent a recession and re-ignite growth."

Taking stock of an economy that has run out of steam with dizzying speed, as growth plummeted from 5.6 percent in the second quarter to 1.4 percent in the fourth, the committee noted an erosion in consumer and corporate confidence, "exacerbated by rising energy costs that continue to drain consumer purchasing power and press on business profit margins."

It also cited weaker retail sales and business spending on capital equipment as well as overstocked inventories.

"Taken together, and with inflation contained, these circumstances have called for a rapid and forceful response of monetary policy," the committee said.

The rate cut had been widely awaited and anticipated in US corporate circles after Greenspan—in an unusually frank observation—told Congress last week that first quarter momentum had likely shriveled to near zero.

As the Fed committee began meeting here on Tuesday, the Conference Board, a business research group, disclosed that its all-important consumer confidence index tumbled 14.2 points in January to its lowest level since December 1996.

Since consumer spending accounts for two thirds of US output, any sharp fall-off in confidence could be seriously destabilizing, a danger alluded to by Greenspan last week.

Wednesday's aggressive action on interest rates was aimed, therefore, at emboldening worried consumers and making it easier for businesses to borrow money, expand output and increase payrolls.

In the present economy, the principal obstacle to growth, according to Greenspan, is the bloated state of business inventories. Companies are currently trying to sell what they have already produced rather than actually expanding output.

Citing weak goods purchases in the fourth quarter, analyst Mark Vitner of First Union said "the economy made little progress in clearing out the recent buildup in inventories."

"What is needed is a pickup in retail sales and the Fed's rate cuts may help spur that."

At Salomon Smith Barney, economists have said production growth will have to be pared back to a level below that of demand in order to get rid of built-up inventories.

For that reason, the financial services firm sees a contraction of the US economy by 1.1 percent in the first quarter.

As growth stalls, the Fed itself is coming under attack in some circles, where its aggressive, anti-inflationary rate hikes in 1999 and 2000 are blamed for the slowdown.

The Open Market Committee raised rates by 1.75 points between June 1999 and May 2000, a policy that critics say was unnecessary in the absence of serious inflationary pressure.

Given the six- to 18-month lag time between a change in rates and its impact on the economy, analyst Robert Scott of the Economic Policy Institute sees little chance that continued reductions will spark a turnaround in 2001. *AFP*

TRADERS in the Eurodollar futures pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange signal their trades shortly after the Federal Reserve announced it was lowering interest rates by half a point for the second time in a month. AP

As US falters, all eyes are on Maestro

FEDERAL Reserve Board Chair Alan Greenspan arrives for work. The Federal Reserve, trying to prevent the weakening economy from slipping into a recession, is prepared to aggressively cut interest rates to rejuvenate economic growth. AP

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan, whose godlike status on Wall Street is undiminished even amid mounting worries over the US economy's health, is facing one of the key challenges of his career as he tries to keep the 10-year expansion on track.

Moving ahead full-steam in his bid to avert a recession, Greenspan and Fed policymakers slashed interest rates by a half percentage point on Wednesday.

That brought the total of rate cuts since Jan. 3, when the Fed launched the current easing cycle, to a full point.

This is tantamount to warp speed for a Greenspan-led Fed that has tended to err on the side of caution in its conduct of monetary policy. Most economists believe the Fed chief and the US central bank are taking the right steps.

Some critics—albeit more from abroad than inside the United States—are second-guessing Greenspan, saying he should have acted even sooner and should not have ratcheted rates up as high as he did last year.

But most US economists give him high marks for the way he has navigated some dangerous shoals so far.

"I always say, 'Never bet against the Fed'," said James Glassman, a senior economist at JP Morgan in New York, reciting an old mantra that Wall Street adopted anew since the Jan. 3 rate cut that lifted some of its gloom.

Even some economists who are critical of the man dubbed the "Maestro" in a recent book by star reporter Bob Woodward, tend to be humble about it.

"I think the Fed raised interest rates too high too fast and did not pay enough attention to the impact of higher energy prices on consumers' pocketbooks," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo Bank.

But he was quick to admit: "I don't think I could have done it any better."

In a frank assessment of the economy's troubles, Greenspan said last week that growth was probably "close to zero." It slowed in the fourth quarter of last year to a meager 1.4-percent annual pace—the slowest in over five years.

Private economists are mixed on whether a full-blown recession is in the cards, but a handful believes one is here already. Either way, Greenspan has a tricky task ahead.

The revered Fed chief's track record on the economy is an enviable one by any standards, but it's certainly not flawless.

He started out well, riding to the rescue of the stock market when it crashed in 1987.

Then Greenspan continued former Fed Chair Paul Volcker's fight against inflation and guided the economy to a "soft landing" of moderate, sustainable growth in 1994-1995.

He helped calm world financial markets at a time of turbulence abroad, cutting US rates three times in 1998.

And he was swifter than most economists to embrace the notion during the 1990s of a "New Economy" marked by higher productivity and less susceptibility to inflation.

But analysts widely believe that Greenspan himself wishes he had moved more quickly to reduce interest rates during the 1990-91 recession. He may also regret the Fed's last rate increase, a half-point move, in May of last year. *Reuters*

Japan economy stalled, not receding, says BOJ

OKINAWA, Japan—Bank of Japan Policy Board member Toshio Miki said yesterday that risks to Japan's fragile economic recovery were growing but had not yet caused the economy to backslide.

"The economy has temporarily stalled, but it is not receding at this point," Miki told business leaders on this southern Japanese island.

But Miki said the central bank would need to take a "flexible monetary policy stance" if concerns of an economic downturn appeared or if systemic risks to the financial system arose.

Miki voted with the majority of the Policy Board at its most recent meeting on Jan. 19 when the central bank decided to maintain its current policy of keeping key short-term interest rates at 0.25 percent.

The bank raised rates for the first time in a decade last August, but had come under growing pressure recently to reverse that move amid a tumble in Tokyo share prices and signs that a tentative economic recovery had stalled.

Recent data have shown a tailing off in export and capital spending growth—two engines of the nascent recovery—while consumer spending, the biggest chunk of the economy, remains depressed.

At the Jan. 19 meeting, BOJ Governor Masaru Hayami instructed the central bank staff to study ways of improving the provision of liquidity to the markets ahead of the fiscal year-end in March.

Markets have been looking for hints of what exactly this will entail, but no details have been forthcoming. The BOJ has said it will announce the findings of its study by its next board meeting on Feb. 9.

For the time being, the central bank would provide ample funds to the money market for funding needs ahead of the business year close in March, Miki said.

He added the central bank would maintain its current extremely easy monetary policy to ensure a solid recovery.

"The central bank should be ready at all times to provide liquidity," noting that firms were more sensitive this year because of falling stock prices.

While declining prices did not mean the country was falling into a deflationary spiral, Miki raised concerns that this could hurt corporate profits.

He also highlighted the impact of the US slowdown on Asian economies and the risk of falling Japanese exports and cast doubt on whether brighter corporate profits would feed through into consumer spending any time soon.

"The so-called dam theory, where water (profits) from the corporate sector would spill over into the household sector, in reality it's not that easy," he said.

Miki's comments had no impact on markets, with the yen remaining on the defensive against the dollar following the Federal Reserve's move to cut interest rates aggressively on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Mitsubishi execs face criminal charges

TOKYO—Japanese police turned over to prosecutors yesterday the findings of their investigation against Mitsubishi Motors Corp. and nine of its executives suspected in a systematic cover-up of thousands of car defects.

The move may result in criminal charges against two former vice presidents and seven top quality-control officials accused of hiding about 10,300 customer complaints from government inspectors in 1999.

The officials hid the customer complaints that would have led to recalls, only showing those that were not likely to, police said.

Police refused to disclose names but said former Mitsubishi president Katsuhiko Kawasoe was not among them and did not divulge further details.

The automaker, however, was targeted in the investigation because it was suspected of carrying out the cover-up, police said.

Last summer, Mitsubishi—34 percent owned by DaimlerChrysler—acknowledged it had been systematically hiding driver complaints about possible auto defects for more than 20 years. Kawasoe resigned in disgrace.

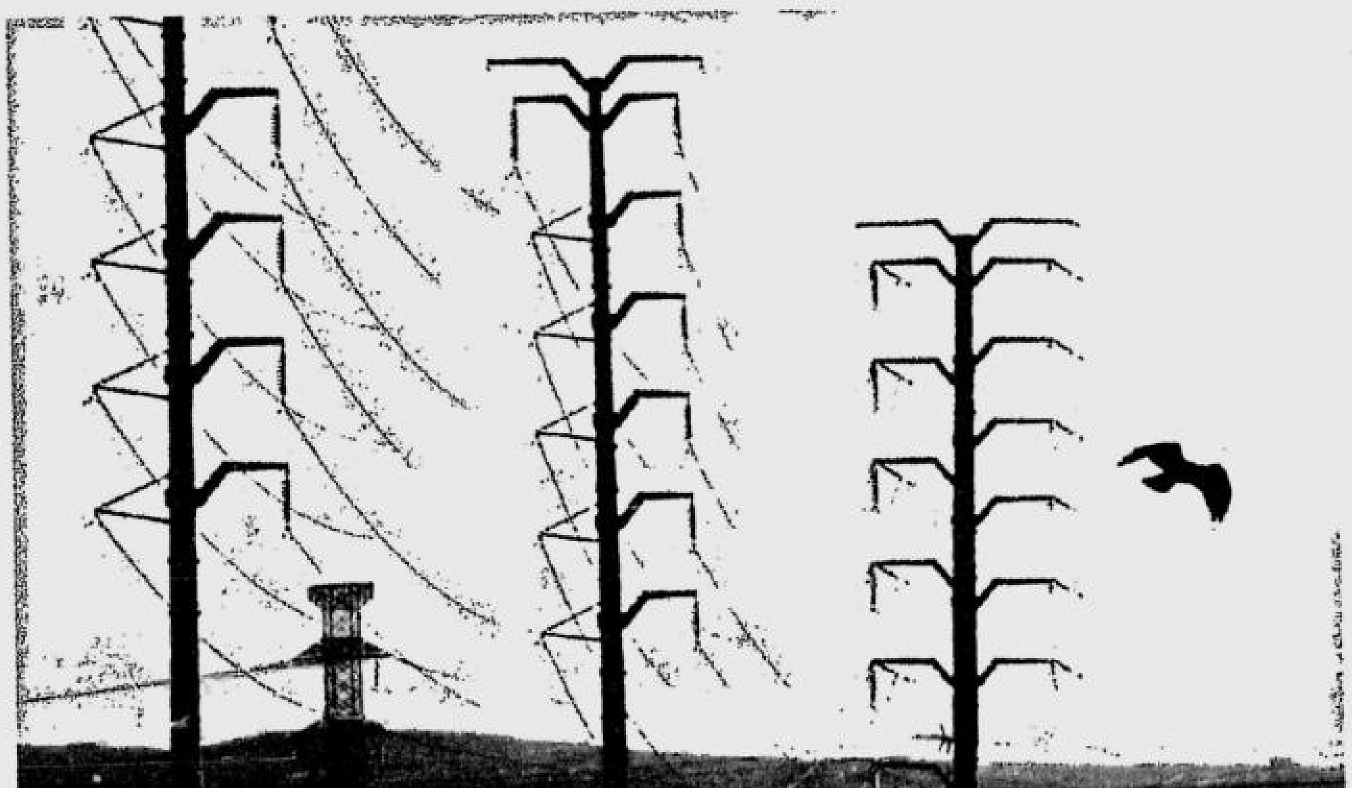
The defects included failing brakes, fuel leaks and malfunctioning clutches. There had been no reported fatal accidents related to the defects.

"MMC recognizes that this is a matter of great seriousness which is now in the hands of the prosecutors' office," Mitsubishi Motors said in an English-language statement.

Mitsubishi Motors did not know who the officials possibly facing criminal charges were. The automaker carried out an internal investigation but dozens of people had to be interviewed, making it unclear which ones had been singled out by police, a Mitsubishi Motors spokesperson said on condition of anonymity.

The charges would mark the first time in Japan that auto company officials faced criminal charges in a defect cover-up.

Prosecutors will decide whether to charge them with violating Japan's Road Vehicles Act, which carries a maximum penalty of a fine of up to 200,000 yen ($1,700) upon conviction. *AP*



AN EAGLE flies by high-voltage energy towers from the Rosarito Power Plant 15 miles south of Tijuana, Mexico. Power companies from the United States are lining up to build generator plants in Mexico to supply energy-starved California. AP

Amazon.com cuts 1,300 jobs

SEATTLE—Amazon.com Inc. said it would fire 1,300 people, or 15 percent of its workforce, and close a warehouse as the No. 1 Internet retailer's fourth-quarter loss widened to $545.1 million.

The job cuts are the most ever announced by Amazon.com. The last time the company cut jobs was a year ago, when it fired 150 workers. Amazon.com also said it lowered its 2001 sales estimate to between $3.3 billion and $3.6 billion from $4 billion because a slowing US economy had damped consumer spending.

Amazon.com is trimming corporate staff and is closing a warehouse in Georgia. In Seattle, a customer-service center will shut down and a warehouse will run on a seasonal basis. The six- year-old company, whose cumulative loss exceeds $2.29 billion, is cutting expenses to reach profitability, excluding costs related to mergers and stock-based compensation, in the fourth quarter.

"These were things that needed to be done to ensure profitability," chief financial officer Warren Jenson said on a conference call.

Jenson also said Amazon.com did not need to tap the securities markets for additional financing—a concern that helped pushed the company's shares down 69 percent the past year.

"Unless we choose to raise cash to further strengthen our balance sheet or for strategic flexibility, we have no need to do so," he said.

The company had $1.1 billion in cash and marketable securities at the end of last year and expected to have $650 million at the end of the first quarter.

The firings and other cost-cutting measures would result in a charge of $150 million, which would be taken in the first half of this year, Amazon.com said. In addition to paying standard severance packages, the company said it established a trust fund of Amazon.com stock that would be distributed to the dismissed employees in 2003.

Sales growth is slowing at Amazon.com, which sells products ranging from books and electronics to cookware and tools.

The company said it expected sales to rise 20 percent to 30 percent from last year's $2.76 billion in revenue, compared with a 68-percent jump between 1999 and 2000. For the first quarter, the company projected sales of $650 million to $700 million.

Amazon.com's fourth-quarter sales rose 44 percent to $972.4 million from $676 million, helped by a free-shipping offer and guaranteed Christmas delivery on orders placed by Dec. 23. Amazon.com added four million customers during the quarter, bringing its total to 29 million.

The loss in the quarter of $1.53 a share compares with a year-earlier loss of $323.2 million, or 96 cents.

Excluding costs related to mergers and stock-based compensation, the loss was $90.4 million, or 25 cents a share. On that basis, the company did better than the 26-cent average estimate of analysts polled by First Call/Thomson Financial. *Bloomberg*

Stop globalization, Pacific nations ask

WAIKIKI, Hawaii—Pacific nations, among the smallest and most isolated in the world, have had a look at globalization and, while agreeing it has some good points, they do not like it.

The Pacific Leaders Conference, bringing together prime ministers, presidents and ministers from nations and territories, heard repeated pessimist assessments of globalization.

Organized by the US government funded East West Center's Pacific Islands Development Program, it was billed as a chance to discuss the impact of globalization on the small regional economies.

The two strongest critics of globalization came from the smallest countries, Niue's prime minister, Sani Lakatani, and Cook Islands Prime Minister Terepai Maoata.

Both operate tax haven systems. Last week, the US banking system imposed a ban on sending US dollars to Niue for fear it was involved in money laundering. Maoata feared the same might happen to his country.

Lakatani was particularly bitter, saying the globalization trend was actually preventing his government from improving the quality of life of his people.

"Small island nations are vulnerable and are practically of no consequence when it comes to combating the adverse effects of globalization and what is emerging is a new order of colonialism," he told the conference. *AFP*

WTO chief seeks new agenda

MELBOURNE—World Trade Organization chief Mike Moore has set an ambitious July deadline for an agreement on a basic agenda for a new round of global trade talks.

The WTO's 140 members agreed this week to hold a meeting of trade ministers in Qatar in November, but Moore said yesterday he wanted issues to be ironed out even earlier to avoid the wide differences which derailed talks in Seattle in late 1999.

"We think we're entering a new stage of very intensive consultations now that by the end of July we should see the shape of what will happen at the ministerial," Moore told Reuters in an interview.

"When I'm talking to ministers, I'm saying, 'Look, it's the end of July, because I think we cannot walk into another ministerial with so many differences again.'"

The Seattle negotiations fell apart with the United States and European Union battling over farm subsidies and developing countries fighting calls by the United States and European Union to put minimum labor standards on the trade agenda.

"I think one of our mistakes in Seattle was we tried to conclude a negotiation, not launch one. We got into far too much detail," Moore said.

Moore said he was encouraged by the officials in the new administration of US President George W. Bush, who will be key to launching a new global trade round.

Robert Zoellick, nominated to be the next US trade representative, said at his confirmation hearing on Tuesday that achieving a free trade zone of the Americas was a top priority, but Washington also wanted to launch a new round of global negotiations, emphasizing farm trade.

"I found (his comments) more than reassuring, very comforting," Moore said. "I believe they will push."

Moore said, however, it was incumbent on Geneva to make progress on launching a global round or else the United States and others would focus more on regional agreements.

"You can do the Americas plus you can do a new round. They're not in contradiction. It's a level of intensity, and we must get things moving in Geneva. And we intend to," he said.

Moore will be meeting Zoellick later this month.

Agriculture, foreign investment levels and anti-dumping measures remained the biggest stumbling blocks to launching a new round, Moore said.

Another challenge was how to draw in developing countries that were already struggling to maintain existing agreements.

"People genuinely say to you, 'We can't do what we've agreed to do because we have a civil war. Our country's falling apart. We have enormous problems. Please don't ask us to do more things,'" Moore said.

He was due to meet several non-governmental organizations and the head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Sharan Burrow, in Melbourne, before meeting Australia's Trade Minister Mark Vaile and other ministers in Canberra next week.

Trade unions and other NGOs were the source of massive anti-globalization protests which began in Seattle and have been repeated worldwide in the past year, and Moore is making an effort to meet with their representatives on his travels.

But ultimately, he said, if they wanted to have an impact on global trade talks those groups would have to work on governments in their own countries.

"You don't change our position by talking to me. You change our position by changing our owners' position," he said. *Reuters*

Coke meets profit forecast in 4th quarter

ATLANTA—Coca-Cola Co. on Wednesday reported a jump in fourth-quarter profits, but analysts said a drop in revenue and sluggish growth in the key North American market cast a shadow over the soft drink maker's prospects for 2001.

Atlanta-based Coca-Cola, the world's No. 1 soft drink company, earned $242 million, or 10 cents a diluted share, after charges related to a company restructuring, the settlement of a racial discrimination lawsuit and other items.

Excluding the charges, the world's leading beverage company said it earned 38 cents a share in the quarter, matching Wall Street analysts' consensus forecast compiled by research firm First Call/Thomson Financial.

The profit was an improvement over the fourth-quarter of 1999, when Coca-Cola reported a loss of $45 million, or 2 cents a share, after write-downs and special items, or a profit of 31 cents a share before special items.

Shares of Coca-Cola gained 9 cents to close at $58 on Wednesday on the New York Stock Exchange.

"I would almost characterize this as somewhat of a kitchen-sink type of quarter where they really needed to purge and clean to prepare the business to hopefully execute and deliver better financial results going forward in 2001," said Skip Carpenter, analyst with Credit Suisse First Boston.

Coke, which capped a turbulent year that saw it cut thousands of jobs and name a new management team, said it was comfortable with current 2001 estimates of earnings per share of $1.67 to $1.80.

It also said it expected to meet its 2001 target of 6-7 percent growth in unit case volume, a key measure of financial health in the soft drink industry. One unit case equals 24 eight-ounce servings.

"I think that their outlook for 2001 is overly aggressive given that there was no sign of momentum building in the fourth quarter," said Caroline Levy, analyst with UBS Warburg, who noted that Coke's revenue slipped one percent to $4.9 billion in the fourth quarter.

For the three months ended Dec. 31, 2000, Coca-Cola said its worldwide unit case volume increased by 3 percent, as the company had projected last month but below a previous forecast of 4 to 4.5 percent growth.

Coca-Cola was able to meet its revised target largely due to an exceptional showing in its Asia-Pacific operations, which posted 9 percent volume growth in the period. Growth in European and Eurasian markets was an anemic 2 percent.

But it was results from North America, Coca-Cola's largest market and the one often cited as the barometer of its fortunes, that particularly troubled analysts. Volumes in North America grew around the one-percent mark in the fourth quarter. *Reuters*

Morgan Stanley CEO starts to fill hole left by Mack

NEW YORK—Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. chief executive Philip Purcell is beginning to fill what he calls the "big hole" left by the abrupt resignation last week of president John Mack.

Purcell and top deputies briefed analysts at a private lunch in the 41st-floor dining room at the firm's Times Square offices. Their message: The departure won't hurt business. This week, they were slated to divvy up Mack's clients, which included United Parcel Service Inc., Cox Communications Inc. and China Unicom Ltd., two Morgan Stanley executives said.

A former Sears, Roebuck & Co. strategist, Purcell, 57, will have to convince investors and clients that Morgan Stanley will not miss Mack's leadership of its investment banking and trading units—divisions that generate almost two thirds of the firm's revenue—analysts and investors say.

"Phil has never been an investment banker or a trader, whereas John Mack was a person who grew up on the brokerage side of the business," said Guy Moszkowski, an analyst at Salomon Smith Barney. "John was a markets guy. That is not what Phil does. He's a big-picture executive."

Unlike CEOs at rival firms, such as Merrill Lynch & Co.'s David Komansky or Goldman Sachs Group Inc.'s Henry Paulson, Purcell didn't cut his teeth in trading or investment banking. Mack, who quit after investors and analysts said he lost a power struggle with Purcell, started out as a bond salesman.

The two men had run the firm since the May 1997 merger of Morgan Stanley Group Inc. and Dean Witter, Discover & Co., with Purcell handling asset management and US retail brokerage.

Purcell's personal life is also distant from Wall Street. After almost two decades in New York, the father of seven still commutes home to Chicago on weekends.

"Mack has, for so many years, been identified with Morgan Stanley that his exit matters," said Michael Holland, chair of New York-based money manager Holland & Co. LLC. *Bloomberg*

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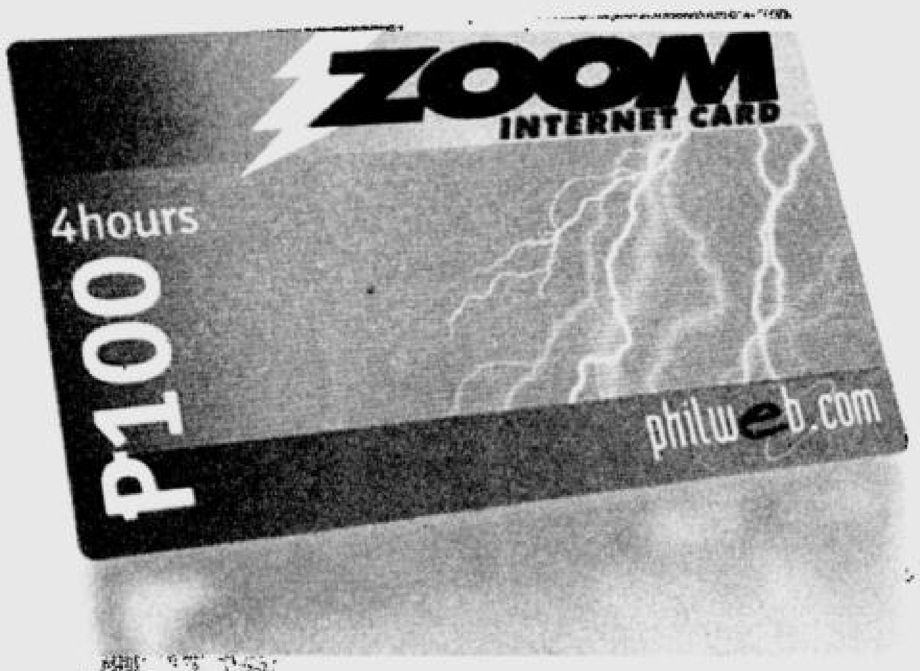

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PDI-Feb 2, 9 & 16, 2001

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O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

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2001-08-05 * OFFICE/COMPUTER SUPPLIES (Bond/Recording Paper, Mailing Envelope, Storage Box, Ink Cartridges, Floppy Disk, etc.)
2001-08-06 SERVICES: Gear Cutting of (spiral) Bevel Gear, 27/28 teeth
* (To be purchased thru Open-Ended Purchase Order for a period of six months starting April 2001).

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. (Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms on **February 7, 2001.**

Bidding documents available on **February 02, 2001** upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents **February 12, 2001.**

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. For inquiries, please call no. **921-2574.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - Feb 1 & 2 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given to the public that Membership Certificate Number 1836 for 100 units of the Manila Golf & Country Club, Inc. issued in the name of Eastern Shipping Lines, Inc. has been reported lost.

If within one year from the date of the last publication of this notice no contest is presented, said certificate shall be cancelled and in lieu thereof, a new Membership Certificate will be issued.

MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

(PDI – Jan. 26, Feb. 2 & 9, 2001)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective **February 1, 2001 Issue.**

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS (National Edition): **Box Ad** - P230.00/col. cm.; **Line Ad** - P 65.00/line; **Obituaries** - P230.00/col. cm.

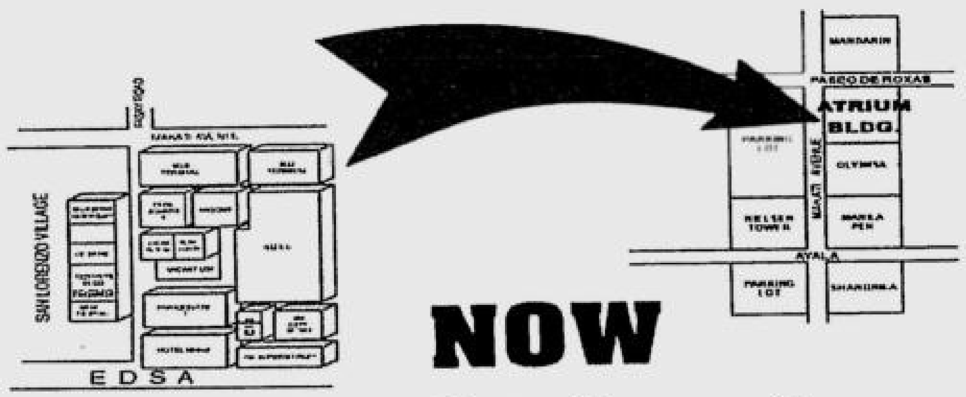
JOB MARKET (Metro Manila Edition): **Box Ad** - P190.00/col. cm.

Color Surcharge for NC and JM: 1 spot color - 30%; 2 spot color - 60%; Full color - 80%

CLASSIFIED ASSETS: **Box Ad** - P190.00/col. cm. **(No color surcharge)**

* Rates are VAT exclusive

Inquirer's Makati Branch



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INQUIRER

TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Making whoopee

Q. How many babies are conceived around the world every day?

A. According to World Health Organization, people around the world have sex more than 100 million times a day, resulting in approximately 910,000 conceptions (as well as 350,000 cases of sexually transmitted diseases). The WHO also estimates that 1,440 women die each day (an average of one a minute) because of complications during pregnancy or childbirth. About 150,000 unwanted pregnancies end each day in abortion.

For the Record. The average erect penis lengths for ten selected animal species: 1. Humpback whale - 10 ft.; 2. Elephant - 5 to 6 ft.; 3. Bull - 3 ft.; 4. Stallion - 2 ft. 2 in.; 5. - Rhinoceros - 2 ft.; 6. Pig - 18 to 20 in; 7. Man - 6 in.; 8. Gorilla - 2 in.; 9. Cat - 3/4 in.; 10. Mosquito - 1/100 in.

Not-So-Famous First. The first woman to wear trousers or pants as an article of feminine apparel was the famous French actress Sarah Bernhardt, who was photographed at her Paris studio in 1876 costumed in a jacketed trouser suit of extraordinarily modern style and appearance. (It should be noted that the 'bloomers' introduced by the American feminist Amelia Bloomer in 1848 were baggy pants worn beneath a short skirt, and not trousers in the generally accepted sense.) But trousers for street wear would not be in vogue until the sensational appearance of the German actress and singer Marlene Dietrich in the 1930 film *Morocco*, though the lesbian *coda* intended by the movie's iconoclastic director was totally lost on the housewives of American who emulated her.

WORD WATCH

Pantalon : from the Spanish *pantalon*, which, in turn, derives ultimately from Pantalone, a stock character in Italian comedy who always wore a particular type of trousers with long, tight legs and a sort of bloused effect around the hips.

PDI – February 2, 2001

SUMMONS - FAMILY LAW

CITATION JUDICIAL
NOTICE TO RESPONDENT : ROWENA GOMEZ
YOU ARE BEING SUED
PETITIONERS NAME IS : JOMAR GOMEZ
CASE NUMBER : FFL057015

You have **30 CALENDAR YEAR DAYS** after this Summons and Petition served on you to file a Response (form 1282) at the court and serve a copy on the petitioner. A letter or phone call will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. If you cannot pay the filling fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately.

NOTICE: The restraining orders on the back are affective against both husband and wife until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered or the court makes further orders. These orders are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

1. The name and address of the court is:
   SOLANO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
   600 UNION AVENUE
   FAIRFIELD, CA 94533
2. The name, address, and telephone number of petitioner's attorney, or petitioner without an attorney, is:
   JOMAR GOMEZ
   105 DEL RIO CIR. UNIT #1
   VACAVILLE, CA 95687
   (707) 469-8700

Date: December 19, 2000
CHARLES D. RAMSEY
Clerk, by V. Lee, Deputy

(PDI - Jan 26 Feb 2 9 & 16 2001)

OBITUARIES

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies;
and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

ENGR. CLARO Y. SULIT

of Bauan, Batangas and Quezon City

Passed away on January 31, 2001 at the age of 75.

His bereaved wife **Loring**; children **Helen** and **Jess Cifra**, **Gerry** and **Fe**, **Glenda** and **Sonny Rosales**, and **Joyce** and **Jhombet Buendia**; grandchildren **Andre**, **Marc**, **Don**, **Ceejai**, **Justin**, **Jeffrey**, **Julibet** and **JD**; sister **Lestie**; brother **Ric**; sisters-in-law **Oniang** and **Josie**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in Heaven.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 1:30 p.m. Mass.

"To be absent from the body is to be present in the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

ZOSIMO PIO ROA y RABAGO
"IMOK"

of
Cebu City and Cagayan de Oro City

Born : September 5, 1952
Died : January 29, 2001

Beloved son of **Pio I. Roa** (†) and **Jacinta Lydia Rabago** (†)
and stepson of **Flora Borromeo** (†).
A loving brother to **Nanette**, **Ruby** and **Teddy** (†)
A wonderful uncle to **Patrick** and **Kristine**, **John**, **Nicole**, **Jopi** and **Flora**
Papa Imok to **Partricia** and **Jared**

A thoughtful, kind, generous and selfless friend to all those who know him and whose lives he touched. A proud member of the Roa Clan. Renaissance man.

Imok's mortal remains lie at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes, Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City.

His body will arrive in Cagayan de Oro City on February 2, 2001 and will lie in state at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes (Cagayan de Oro).

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at Greenhills Memorial Park after the 9:00 AM Funeral Mass at the Greenhills Chapel.

Our Dearly Beloved "Mommy"

ROSARIO HERNANDEZ DELOS SANTOS

Peacefully went to be with the Lord on January 23, 2001
at the age of 76.

She left behind her loving husband **Almario**; children **Efren & Bernie**, **Lino & Maris**, **Ray & Thelma**, **Rita & Dody**, **Edith & George**, and **Maria & Winston**; grandchildren **Angela** (♀), **Abby**, **Inna**, **Anna**, **Alvin**, **Paulo**, **Gabe**, **Melissa**, **Aica**, **Eric**, **Karla**, **Nikko**, **Zeke**, **Miggy**, **Fiel**, **Alexa**, **Wesley & Jayden**.

Her remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine, Doña J. Rodriguez Avenue, Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

"...absent
with the body
to be present
with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

PEDRO R. BATALLONES, JR.

August 21, 1926 - January 30, 2001

His remains lie in state at the
Malate Catholic Church.

Interment will be on February 3, 2001
at the South Cemetery after the
2:00 p.m. Mass.

JUANITA Q. BALTAZAR

May 7, 1908 - January 31, 2001

Her loving husband **Dr. Narciso L. Baltazar** (†); children **Popo** (†) and **Dayday**; **Nene**, **Toy**, **Chita** and **Lito**, **Mercedes**, **Chong** and **Mike** (†), **Ric** and **Lyn**; grandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at 4:00 PM.

DR. ALICIA PEREZ-BABAO-MEDINA

of San Juan, Batangas

Widow of the late Godofredo Medina Y Zafra
now peacefully rests in the Grace of our Lord
on 31 January 2001 at the age of 71.

Her bereaved children **Tomas**, **Fernando** and **Cleofe**;
daughter-in-law **Gloria (Nee Cortes)**; grandchildren **Nicole**,
Jaimie and **Stephen**; sisters **Amelia** and **Zenaida**;
nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request for your prayers
for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 2, La Funeraria Paz,
New Building, until Sunday, 04 February 2001
when she will be cremated at 2:00 p.m. -
at Funeraria Paz Crematory.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192

COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
Tels (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City Tel. 894-5932 to 34
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143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon Cit; Tels. 749-3808 to 11

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OBITUARIES

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DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

Masses for
the sixth death anniversary of

Enrique Muñoz Razón

February 2, 2001 - 12:00 Noon
Stella Maris Chapel
ICTSI Admin Bldg., MICT, Manila

February 3, 2001 - 7:00 a.m.
Our Lady of Remedies Parish
Malate Catholic Church, Malate, Manila

February 3, 2001 - 7:15 a.m.
Santuario de San Jose Parish
Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

February 3, 2001 - 8:00 a.m.
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish
Ermita Catholic Church, Ermita, Manila

February 3, 2001 - 12:15 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio Parish
Forbes Park, Makati City

February 3, 2001 - 5:30 p.m.
Parish of St. James the Great
Ayala Alabang Village, Alabang, Muntinlupa City

February 3, 2001 - 7:00 p.m.
St. Alphonsus de Liguori Parish
Magallanes, Pasay City

February 3, 2001 - 7:30 p.m.
Mary Help of Christians Parish
Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in Him may not die
but have eternal life."
John 3:16

AQUILINA RIGOR vda. de CONFESOR

of Davao City and Candon, Ilocos Sur

Now peacefully rest in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord
on January 31, 2001 at the age of 95.

Her loving husband **Enrique** (†); children **Nedasur** (†) and **Manuel** (†) **Belisario, Jose** and **Feliciana**; grandchildren **Hector Gerard, Emma Rita, Analyn Grace C. Belisario, Peter Raymond** and **Maria Guadalupe**; great grandchildren **Jose Ricardo, Jennifer Ricca**; sister **Irene** (†); brother **Adonis** (†); brother-in-law and sister-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Presidential Chapel, Cosmopolitan Funeral Parlor, Camus Street, Davao City.

Interment will be on Monday, February 5, 2001 at 10:00 a.m. at the San Pedro Memorial Park, Davao City after the 9:00 a.m. service at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), Legaspi Street, Davao City.

Psalm 23:1-4

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me
lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul. Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil, for you are with me; Your rod and your staff
they comfort me...

Generosa Tumandao Chan

(July 17, 1914 - January 31, 2001)

of Dulag, Leyte passed away peacefully
early morning of January 31, 2001.

The bereaved children **Peter** and **Nena, Felisa** and **Manuel** (†), **Domie** and **Tenie** (†), **Perping** and **Vicente, Auring** and **Pio, Jimmy** and **Luty, Manny** and **Dzet, Frankie, Rudy** and **Nelda**; sisters, grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives, request for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at Dulag, Leyte.

Interment will be announced later.

Agnes "Girlie" Flores Domingo

Peacefully joined her Creator on January 31, 2001.

Her loving husband **Angel "Lito" T. Domingo**; daughters **Mia & Marga**; brothers and sisters **Baby Cusi, Waldo & Chona Capay, Hilda & Pramool Nanongkai, Budot & Chi Capay**; brother-in-law **Ben & Guia**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park.

Interment will be announced later.

The family of the late

RUBEN B. ANCHETA

acknowledges with
grateful appreciation
your kind expression
of sympathy.

Our sincerest thank you
for all your prayers and
flowers.

In Affectionate Remembrance
on the **Tenth Death Anniversary**
of

ATTY. ROLANDO N. MEDALLA SR.

of Bacolod City

Who passed into Eternal Life on February 2, 1991.

His loving wife **Ding**; sons and daughters-in-law **Butch** and **Crisel, Bob** and **Chloe**; daughter **Bambi**; grandchildren **Arthrie, Jaypee, Robbie** and **Francine**; brothers and sisters **Thelma, Papong, Mila** and **Junior**; nephews, nieces and other relatives request those who knew him to pray for the eternal rest of his soul.

Ex-Mayor ANGILEO P. PAUIG

of Enrile, Cagayan

Peacefully joined his Creator on Sunday, January 28, 2001 at the age of 97.

His loving wife **Adoracion** (†); children **Lourdes, Jonas & Dulce, Elena, Angeleo Jr.** (†) **& Norma, Wilhelmina & Pascual** (†), **Nicolas & Paula, Ex-Mayor Domingo & Vilma**; grandchildren **Jeng** and **Annalee, Daisy** and **Lito, Maricon** and **Arnel, Dolly, Joy, Egay, James** and **Cristy, Bong, Del, Mike** and **Gemma, Deanna, Ida, Jojo, Noli, Sheilla, Jay, Beng, Che, Paul, JR, Bambi, BJ, Apple** and **Ferdie**; great-grandchildren **Joel, Jeric, Axzel, Angela, Jonjon, Bruce,** and **Javier**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence at No. 7 Pauig St., Centro, Enrile, Cagayan.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at Enrile, Cagayan.

"...absent with the body to be
present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

"I
am
not
praying
for
the
world,
but
for
those
you
have
given
me
for
they
are
yours."
John 17:9

In selling a vice, firm treads carefully on prohibited grounds

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MARKETING STRATEGY

IN A market that is highly regulated by health and consumer watchdog agencies, Philip Morris treads carefully in its marketing efforts to stand out among the numerous cigarette brands in the market.

Philip Morris Philippines Inc. brand manager Jasper O. Evangelista says it is a big challenge to push a brand in a market with a lot of restraints. "We adhere to a specific code adopted by our head office in the US. We just have to play by the rules."

Evangelista says the code prohibits direct advertising to minors. "Our ads basically cater to those who are already smokers and who might want to switch brands."

Philip Morris ads do not appear in magazines geared for a young audience; on T-shirts or caps; on early and primetime TV; and on billboards near schools or playgrounds. No cartoon characters are allowed on its ads while all the models appearing on the ads should be over 25.

Philip Morris adopted the code last year as part of efforts to rehabilitate its public image following revelations that the tobacco industry knew much more about the dangers and addictiveness of smoking than previously acknowledged, according to a report of The Washington Post.

Evangelista says the code is part of Philip Morris' drive for "social realignment" of its brands.

Evangelista came into Philip Morris at a time when the cigarette maker was shaking up its management team to perk up its stolid image. The multinational firm injected new blood to the company by getting younger personnel to devise new ways to market the company's products.

Evangelista, who cut his teeth in the ice cream business at Nestle-Magnolia, now deploys his marketing savvy at the country's leading cigarette maker Philip Morris.

Evangelista says the transition from ice cream to cigarettes has been smooth so far considering that both are multinational corporations. "Even though they have different markets, they have the same values or standards."

His main task at Philip Morris was to get smokers who are in their 20s and 30s to switch to the brand through Philip Morris Lights—the first major lights cigarette in the menthol 100s category.

"We're the market leader in premium menthol cigarettes and we want to be the leader in the menthol lights segment with our great quality and taste," Evangelista says.

By introducing a light variant (cigarettes with less nicotine content), Evangelista hopes to set Philip Morris apart from the low priced menthol cigarettes such as Hope and Champion while penetrating the smokers of light cigarettes.

He says there is no explanation to why Filipinos prefer to smoke menthol cigarettes compared to other Asian countries.

He says the company decided to go into the relatively small, light cigarette segment because it was growing fast and the company believed it would reinvigorate the Philip Morris image.

"Our cigarettes were mostly patronized by mature smokers and we wanted to keep the brand updated. The light segment should complete our portfolio currently dominated by mature smokers."

He says the company used the Benson & Hedges packaging but retained the Philip Morris brand, which is more popular in the country.

"It's easier to pronounce than Benson & Hedges."

The Philip Morris brand also came in handy especially in a crowded market. "It's easier to launch and sell to retailers a brand with a long strong brand equity and long history." Its TV ads use the same Philip Morris jingle but this has been tweaked to a more upbeat house type of music to show the transition between brands, Evangelista says.

EVANGELISTA: It's hard to push a brand in a highly regulated market

Manulife Financial Plans

Pioneer Awardees

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The turbulent political events that erupted shortly after our company launch in August 2000 failed to deter Manulife Financial Plans from registering significant achievements worthy of recognition.

As we pay tribute to our Pioneer awardees tonight, we are elated at the thought that every single one of our honorees is capable of competing alongside the industry's finest.

Buoyed by encouraging results in our first four months of operations, we are stepping up our growth plans for the Manulife Financial Plans sales organization. We remain cognizant of the critical role that each member of our sales force plays in responding appropriately to our customers' financial needs and in delivering quality products with the utmost level of professionalism that characterizes the Manulife brand of service.

I am proud to be part of this team and look forward to enjoying this fantastic journey with them.

Congratulations to everyone.

Renato A. Vergel de Dios
President & CEO,
Manulife Financial Plans

Leyol A. Moredo: Executive Vice President & COO
Romeo L. Lualhati: Executive Vice President
Bing C. Ledesma: Vice President Sales & Marketing
John C. Tresvalles: Senior Regional Manager & Regional Head, Metro Manila 4
Noime C. Itchon: Assistant Vice President & Regional Head, Metro Manila 1
Dylyn D. Sanchez: Senior Regional Manager & Regional Head, Metro Manila 2
Nolmart A. Gimeno: Senior Regional Manager & Regional Head, Metro Manila 3

(L-R)

Malaya Gemma D. Platero: Producers Circle, Metro Manila 2; Ma. Veronica Melani O. Alday: 3rd Runner-Up, Top Unit Manager, Metro Manila 3; Nelia R. Sancho: 2nd Runner-Up, Top Unit Manager, Metro Manila 1; Johannah Paula S. Ledesma: First Runner-Up, Top Unit Manager, Metro Manila 3; Arjay L. Olaño: First Runner-Up, Top Agency Manager, Metro Manila 1; Praxedes Y. Tan: Top Agency Manager & Producers Circle, Metro Manila 1; Ma. Lourdes R. de Jesus: 2nd Runner-Up, Top Agency Manager, Metro Manila 3; Celeste B. Estoesta: 3rd Runner-Up, Top Agency Manager, Metro Manila 3; Fortuna D. Moreno: 4th Runner-Up, Top Agency Manager, Metro Manila 2; Eliezl R. Castillo: Top P.E.P.S., Metro Manila 3; Babylyn O. Dela Ysla: 2nd Runner-Up, Top P.E.P.S., Metro Manila 3

Manulife Financial Plans
"Helping you make better financial decisions."

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BUSINESS*Friday*

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

Texting can be a powerful marketing tool, but not yet

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

PEOPLE just cannot say enough about the power of text messaging. Everybody agrees that the text phenomenon was a major factor in bringing people to Edsa.

But can the same power of the short message service feature of cellular phones be harnessed to get the same thousands to buy a company's product or service?

Yolanda Ong, president of advertising firm Campaigns and Grey, tells Business Friday that using text messaging for advertising will surely happen in the near term but it hinges on further technological improvements.

"People in marketing have predicted that it won't be long before texting will become one of the non-conventional advertising media but I think the commercial application will depend on the improvement of broadcast texting," Ong says.

She explains that people can simultaneously send only about four messages which would be expensive if a company intends to send to millions at a time. Then there is also the problem of verifying the source of the message to make sure the message is legitimate.

Ong expects that companies selling products or services to the young would be the first to devise ways to use text messaging as part of their marketing strategy. These would include companies selling clothes or cafes, restaurants and bars that target the growing youth market.

"Texting has really changed social behavior in the Philippines but I believe that a system should first be in place to determine the accuracy of messages for it to be commercially viable," Ong says.

Jeremy Rush, senior vice president and managing director of Fleishman-Hillard, agrees that there is a big potential to the use of text messaging as an advertising medium adding that it is something unique to the Philippines.

"It is used here mainly as an alternative to broadband communication and the Internet but a lot still has to be done before it can be really used as part of marketing. Somebody should really study it," Rush says.

Rush says the power of technology should not be underestimated. One wrong move in dealing with electronic media, he explains, can cost a company millions.

The accuracy of the message, thus, should be ensured for it to be viable.

Jones T. Campos, spokesman of Globe Telecom GMCR Inc., says ensuring the accuracy of the messages is one of the major stumbling blocks to unleashing the commercial power of text messaging.

Globe Telecom, he says, used to send messages through the system regarding the latest parties and events but they stopped the practice when some subscribers said they don't really need the information.

"I think that text messaging is a potentially powerful tool for marketing but maybe not yet. Something else still has to happen before it can really be used," Campos explains.

USE MOBILE COMMERCE

Make marketing footloose

BY DENNIS M. ARROYO

CHECK out the symbolism in People Power II. In the first Edsa revolt, we got our information from one radio station and commuted to the famous highway. In Edsa II, people got text messages from their cell phones as well as from e-mail. They took the MRT rather than the car or bus. People Power Version 2.0 is an upgrade of 1986.

The economy is going through its own revolution as well.

The Internet is attracting more fans and firms. Filipinos have a heavy appetite for cell phones, and this hunger will only increase. Further, people are becoming more and more mobile despite traffic woes. The car population is rising and commuters are taking to the metro train. In fact there are more MRT lines under construction.

Bigger than e-commerce

Put all that together: rising mobility, cell phone ownership and Internet use. Companies must thus make their business footloose: turn to mobile commerce. Experts indeed see a boom in m-commerce. They say that it will beat the scope of computer-based e-commerce.

The Philippines is ahead in this field. Smart and Globe are banging each other head to head, offering text messages on movie schedules, the stock market, breaking news. The average American does not have access to such services.

An international consulting firm called KPMG came out with a paper entitled, "Mobile Internet: Any Place, Any Time, Anything." Its research finds that the cell phone will be in the middle of the m-commerce vortex. It will connect companies with individual customers.

Research by the ARC Group projects wider and wider use. By 2005, more people in America, Asia, and Europe will be linked to the Net via wireless devices than by landline connections.

For its part, Ovum research predicts advertising via wireless will hit $1.2 billion in 2003 and $16 billion in 2005.

Marketing to one

Co-author Roger Amos of the KPMG paper writes that growth in m-commerce "will depend entirely on providing the information and services that customers want."

M-commerce will cater to the lifestyle needs of consumers. The latter gets information concerning shopping, entertainment and other "life maintenance" tasks.

In turn, instant messaging is a great boon to office workers. People can feed valuable bits of information to the head office without too much effort.

Another KPMG co-author, Mark Carleton, adds, "It will reveal the ultimate meaning of customer service. Companies will look to m-commerce to deliver personalized services to their clients." Because of such mobility, they get to "provide face-to-face, personalized service with all their company's resources at their fingertips" from all around the globe.

Marketing will have to shift: focus on "the new customer of one." Wireless will target messages to the individual and at the point of purchase.

Here's an example. Vindigo is a city search guide for wireless devices. This is how the company relates to advertisers the benefits of their program.

"Let's say you own a shoe store and you're having a sale this weekend. Through Vindigo, you can send a message to women aged 18-34 in New York on a Saturday afternoon, who are within three blocks of your store and shopping for clothes."

How is this possible? In a year or two, mobile phones will have location capability. Global positioning satellites can track the phone's exact location. Combine this with data on the user's buying preferences.

Creative forms

One noted expert on wireless is Andrew Seybold, and he publishes a newsletter on that field. He divides the mobile industry into three camps.

"One uses smart cards that turn phones into personal digital assistants," he writes. "Then there are companies who are linking PDAs with phones. Then there are the companies that say: 'I don't need a large device like a PDA to haul around, so we'll make things like e-mail and other quick information available over the phone.' There are some interesting companies out there doing that now."

Combining devices into winning inventions will take creativity. But the Filipino is terrific at creativity.

For example, note the problem of bandwidth or capacity for transmitting messages. The infrastructure is lacking in the Philippines. That's why cell phone owners sometimes can't get through with their voice calls.

The industry here got around the problem in a brilliant way: they stressed text messaging, which requires less bandwidth. The rest is history: the Philippines' daily volume of text messages exceeds the total for the rest of the world combined. Haven't you wondered why Smart and Globe can afford all those full-page ads?

Protecting privacy

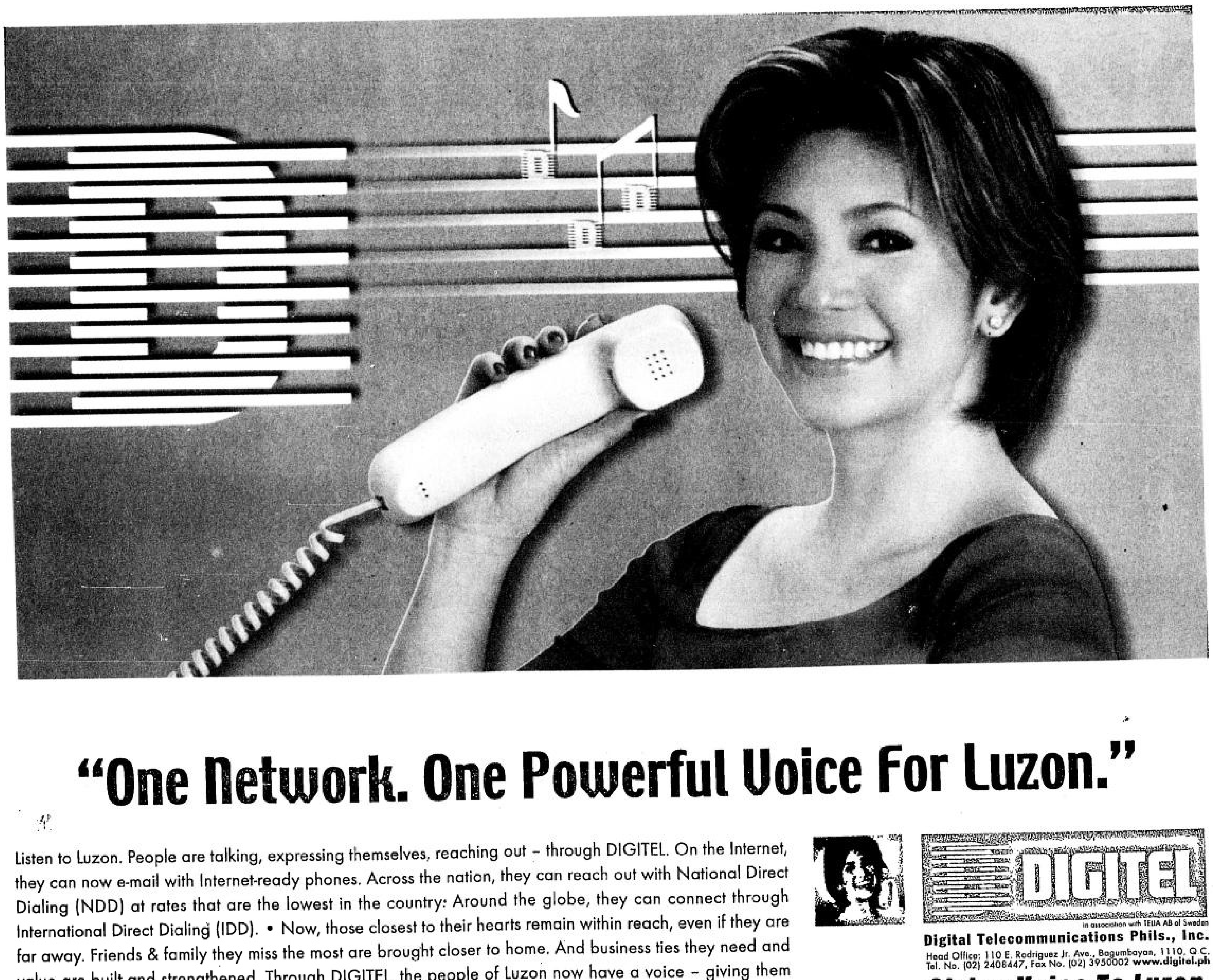
Mobile marketers should be considerate, though, as pointed out by m-marketing writer Allen Weiss.

"Privacy issues abound: Cell phones and other wireless devices going off in restaurants to signal a sale down the street also seems a bit too much for most people to endure."

Weiss urges restraint. Companies should resist the urge to flood consumers with an endless stream of messages.

"Here's my guess as to the outcome of this market research," offers Weiss.

"It will find that wireless advertising does increase sales. There will be recommendations for prudent and responsible actions, like restraining the urge to assault consumers." *(Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com.)*



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LIFESTYLE Home

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ, Subsection Editor

LUSH HIDEAWAY. Trees and various ornamental plants muffle noise and filter dust from invading the Castillo home.

Ageless and graceful as bamboo

(Story on page C8)

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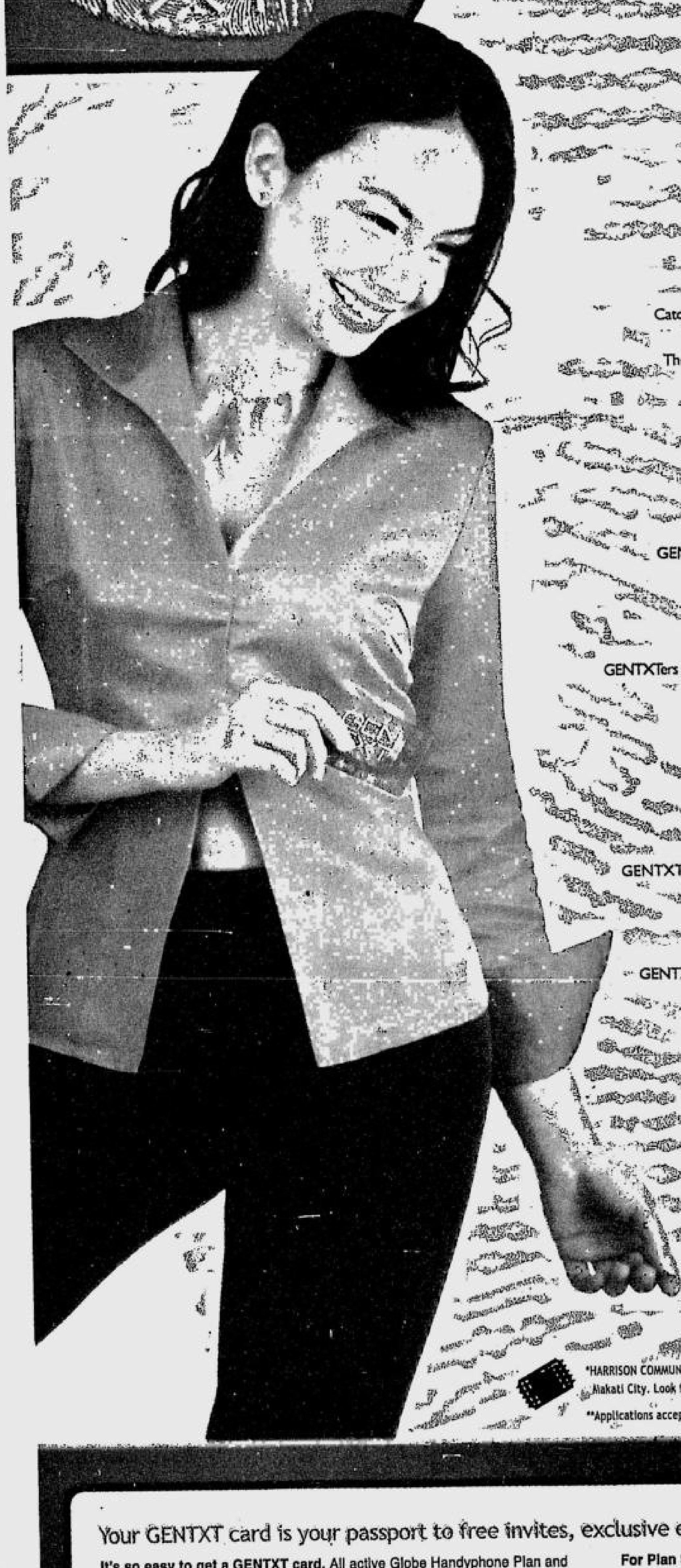

February Gig Guide

"Cast Away", Advanced Screening — 05
An adventure-drama based on a TV series top-billed by Tom Hanks. First 30 GENTXTers to go to Harrison Communications* starting February 2 will get a pair of free tickets.
>> SM Megamall - 7:30 PM

"Family Man", Advanced Screening — 13
A romantic-comedy starring Nicolas Cage and Tea Leoni. First 50 GENTXTers to go to Harrison Communications* starting February 9 will get a pair of free tickets.
>> SM Megamall - 7:30 PM

GENTXT Classics Concert — 14
Catch this divine concert of Kuh Ledesma with The Philharmonic Orchestra. Sign-up a friend to become a GENTXTer by applying at the GENTXT booth in Park Square Globe Telecom Business Center. The first 75 GENTXTers to have their friend's application approved, starting February 2, will get a pair of free tickets.
>> Hard Rock Cafe, Makati - 8:00 PM

"Hannibal", Advanced Screening — 22
A total thriller starring Anthony Hopkins and Julianne Moore. First 30 GENTXTers to go to Harrison Communications* starting February 20 will get a pair of free tickets.
>> SM Megamall - 7:30 PM

Baguio Flower Festival — 24
GENTXT celebrates bounties of blooms during the Baguio Flower Fest. GENTXTers are treated to free food and drinks at the GENTXT Booth on Session Road which will be closed off for a Street Party**.
>> Session Road, Baguio City - 7:00 PM

GENTXT Dessert Deals at Basti's Brew — All Tuesdays & Thursdays of the Month
GENTXTers get free ice cream, iced tea or pastry for a minimum ₱150 purchase on top of their regular privilege at Basti's Brew, Davao.

GENTXT Bev Brigade at The Abbey — WHOLE MONTH
GENTXTers automatically get free iced tea with any food order. Plus, a free beer for a minimum ₱200 purchase on food and drinks on top of their regular privilege at The Abbey in Cebu.

New Partners

California Pizza Kitchen
GENTXTers get a free foccacia appetizer for a minimum ₱500 purchase on food and drinks at California Pizza Kitchen, Glorietta.

Congo Grille
Each GENTXTer gets free bottomless iced tea for any food purchase at Congo Grille, Tomas Morato and El Pueblo.

Repertory Philippines
GENTXTers get 10% off on tickets purchased at the William J. Shaw Theater, Shangri-la Mall (maximum of 10 tickets per transaction).

Hairbytes
GENTXTers get 10% discount on all services for both cash and credit payments in all Hairbytes outlets: Katipunan Ave; Madrigal Ave., Ayala Alabang; Shangri-la Plaza; Eisenhower St., Greenhills; Legaspi Village; McKinley Road, Forbes Park.

Bruno's Barbers
GENTXTers get 10% discount (cash payment only) in all services availed at the following Bruno's Barbers branches: Julia Vargas Avenue; Katipunan; Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills; Power Plant, Rockwell; Pasay Road and Alabang Town Center.

The Spa
GENTXTers get 15% discount on cash payment (10% on credit) for all massage, facial and body care treatments; 10% discount on cash (5% on credit) for full payment on annual gym membership; 10% discount on haircut availed at The Spa Salon (5% on credit) and 10% discount at The Spa Caffe (5% on credit).

*HARRISON COMMUNICATIONS is at the 4F First Life Center Bldg., 174 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Look for GENTXTer Cecille; flash your GENTXT card, and get your free tickets.
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Loren casts a vote of her own

By Leah Salterio

EVEN at the height of the impeachment trial for ousted President Joseph Estrada, Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste refused to set aside her environmental concerns. As vice chair of the Senate committee on environment, Loren has always managed to make time for her various projects and causes.

"An advocacy doesn't stop regardless of what you do and what transpires on national and political affairs," she says.

In fact, on Dec. 22, before attending the last day of the trial prior to the Christmas break, Loren did an early morning tree-planting project at the Calamba and Cabuyao interchanges in the South Luzon Expressway in Laguna. The activity was part of her ongoing Luntiang Pilipinas, which aims to build forest parks in the country.

Store Specialists Inc. top gun Nedy Tantoco helped Loren in the Laguna project. Female members of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) also took part.

"It used to be an empty lot which was being used as a garbage dump site, but we decided to convert it into a forest park," Loren says.

Since the launch of Luntiang Pilipinas in 1998, Loren has planted over 200,000 trees around the country. She has gone as far as Bulacan, Batangas, Quezon, Pangasinan, Dagupan, Benguet, Vigan, Zambales, Leyte, Cebu, Davao, Antique, Negros Oriental, General Santos, Capiz and Misamis Oriental.

Even at the Senate grounds, Loren planted trees to the name of each senator.

On her 40th birthday last year, Loren initiated the planting of 40,000 trees along the North and South Luzon Tollways. She even had billboards made, with the poem by Joyce Kilmer, "I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree..."

"I've been planting since I was 10," Loren beams. "We have a forest park in Calatagan, Batangas. In my lifetime, I must have planted almost a million trees. Don't tell me there's no space. The long breadth of Edsa from Makati to Caloocan, we can plant trees on the sidewalks.

"If I have to challenge or motivate, inspire or appeal to all mayors, I will do it. You can drill on the cements and sidewalks and plant trees two meters apart. Full-grown *na* so we don't have to wait for them, *baka patay na tayo o matanda na*. Imagine if we have trees uniformly planted along Edsa, it would have been different. Look at Germany or Singapore, impeccably clean and lush."

Loren was recently enraged when some 15,000 trees were burned in Sta. Rosa, Laguna after a motorist threw irresponsibly a cigarette butt to the loop.

"Imagine my frustration when I learned about that," she says. "I just wish that people, if they don't want to take part in what we're doing, should be a little responsible.

"People may not associate the project with me but it doesn't matter. What matters is that there is an awareness of people [on] the importance of the environment."

LOREN Legarda-Leviste uses her popularity built in 15 years of media exposure and 15 million votes to promote environmental awareness.

Widespread support

Fortunately, Luntiang Pilipinas has been getting support from private corporations like the three leading oil companies—Shell, Caltex and Petron—which initially take care of the planting.

"We have to get the private sector involved," Loren says. "In fact, I kidded them, the polluters must be the one to take care of the planting. The oil companies are the ones that contribute to the pollution. So as a part of their moral and corporate responsibility, they willingly help out."

In turn, Luntiang Pilipinas, through Trees for Life Foundation, takes care of the maintenance and replacement of trees for three years.

The mayors have also been very supportive and cooperative. Loren's Senate staff links up every month with the city administrator to closely monitor the growth of the trees, with pictures and reports on the forest parks all over the country.

"My aim is to plant trees in all cities and municipalities all over the country, in church yards and school yards, along North and South Expressway, in all the loops and interchanges which I call the Greenbelt areas and all Metro Manila traffic islands," Loren says.

Away from the drama of the impeachment trial, the senator who cried for the truth also cried for the environment

Late last year, Luntiang Pilipinas was also supported by the Board of Investments, with Loren's husband, Tony Leviste, as governor. The board gave the mandate that all BOI-registered firms must plant trees around their vicinity.

Luntiang Pilipinas started promoting forest parks in all campuses in Manila.

Natural passion

Loren's passion for the environment is a natural thing. Since she was a child, she has been into painting seascapes or forest. Some of her works are even displayed in her Senate office.

On Jan. 9, she delivered a privileged speech in which she opposed the plan to dump garbage in Semirara Island in the municipality of Caluya in Antique.

"My late mother's family, Gella, is from Antique so that makes me an Antiqueña," Loren grants. "I'm a proud daughter of Antique. It may be a poor province because it is still in the Club 20, meaning one of the 20 poorest provinces in the country, but I'm proud to be part of it.

"The people from Antique, my Kasimanwas, called on me and I'm glad I was able to help them. Antique is very historic and picturesque. There is an administrative order in 1992, which declares the town of Caluya as a marine turtle sanctuary. It is in the path of migratory birds, so it can also be turned into bird sanctuary.

"Antique is also several nautical miles away from Boracay which is a world-renowned tourist destination. So why will you dump garbage in an area which is a possible eco-tourism site?"

Loren believes there are other alternative sites for Manila's garbage disposal which are not sanctuaries, not water sheds or where there is no community.

Loren also authored of the Solid Waste Management Act, which was recently approved by both houses. It institutionalizes segregation of garbage, mandatory recycling and composting.

"That means up to 30 or 40 percent of the 6,000 metric tons of garbage in Metro Manila can be utilized, then 60 percent *na lang ang hahanapan ng* land fill," she says. "I hope this can partly help the garbage problem."

Loren also coauthored the Clean Air Act.

The clean challenge

Being in a Third World country, Loren says, should even be a challenge for Filipinos to be clean.

"Does it mean that just because we are Third World, we have to be dirty, ugly, unsanitary and inefficient? It's just a matter of putting things in the proper place. To be able to extricate ourselves from this Third World stigma, let's help improve what we can do. Being clean is doable. Planting trees is doable."

Loren has also been monitoring the effects of toxic waste on residents of Pampanga and Olongapo. She has even devoted several episodes of her monthly show, "Loren," on ABS-CBN to the harmful effects of toxic waste.

To this day, however, it frustrates her that the government has not been successful in convincing American officials to help in the cleanup of the toxic waste.

"It entails super funds, a multibillion-peso cleanup," Loren explains. "According to the US general accounting office, we need $1.2 billion to clean up Clark and Subic.

"I even wrote a US senator, John Schafee, from Rhode Island two years ago, who endorsed my letter to the Department of Defense undersecretary where they said clearly they don't owe the Philippines for cleanup. My heart sank."

What frustrates is when she conceptualizes a good project and it's not implemented as she wished it would be, whether it's a law or a program because some don't share her passion or her discipline.

"The mayors have other concerns and have budget limitations," Loren says. "But we got to start somewhere. If I just end up frustrated and not do anything about it because I think it's useless anyway, nothing will happen."

"Of my 20 years on TV and the 15 million votes I received, I believe I must do much more than what a senator must do.

"That's the reason I'm so passionate about the many things I do which are not even required of me. There's an overwhelming mandate, overwhelming expectations, then I should deliver overwhelming deeds. To whom much is given, much is expected."

A look at the Sagip Pasig Movement

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

AS the Department of Environment and Natural Resources gets set to have a new secretary, environmentalists and concerned people anxiously await his first pronouncements and plans. The country's environmental problems are vast. Metro Manila alone is beset by its garbage disposal dilemma.

So the first acts of the DENR's new boss will show the new or old directions our environment is expected to take. In the midst of the new setup, we find one of the busiest workers of the environment, in the area of Pasig River rehabilitation, still hard at work on its projects. This is the Sagip Pasig Movement (SPM), a private NGO engaged in organizing communities, training them for self-reliance, disseminating information, advocating issues, resource mobilization, researching and documenting.

SPM is so structured that it has been known to mobilize communities for environmental purposes in an instant. This ability has become its main distinction, winning the admiration of all those who have seen it work.

Claribel Esternon, Sagip's new executive director, met with us just after coming back from Baguio City. Asked if Pasig River projects extended to Baguio; she replied "no," the meeting was merely for a yearend assessment of SPM's programs, and the change of venue was to provide distance perspective as well as a cool respite.

It seems providential that Esternon begins her term just as a new President enters Malacañang. Esternon, however; is an old hand at community organization, having worked in such projects even during her student days while taking up a course in electrical engineering.

To understand why SPM has become skilled in community organization and mobilization, she says, is to understand SPM's goals and vision—to bring about a society that works as one "for a balanced ecosystem, toward the improvement of life for succeeding generations."

SPM is composed of other NGOs and POs (People's Organizations) which number 230 in all. The organizations may have memberships from 25-200 each. These organizations are in barangays situated not necessarily beside the Pasig itself but also along its tributaries.

They are easy to find, says Esternon, sometimes by their signages, but more often by the presence of Eco-Aides constantly passing to and fro. As most of these barangays coordinate with Linis Ganda, a recycling group, they usually have garbage segregation modules and redemption areas. Aesthetic improvements in their grounds are also easily discernible.

SPM, which works closely with multinational corporations like Unilever, undertakes one of its major projects with them. This is the Clean River Zone (CRZ), started in 1998. CRZ is a social movement, Esternon explains, which calls for the participation of major stakeholders (industries, public markets) and multisectoral groups (academe, church, labor) in river rehabilitation since SPM is aware that it can do only so much alone. Its program includes the establishment of 50 CRZs in communities along the Pasig and its tributaries. This has stretched SPM efforts from Manila to Pasig, Quezon City, Makati and Mandaluyong.

Of the 50 CRZs, the Paco-Pandacan-Ermita area has wrapped up work, reports Esternon, and there, the Manila Industries Movement for the Environment (MIME) has been formed. MIME members include Unilever, Honda, Isuzu, Shell, National Food Authority, Petron, Napocor, Manila Gas and Caltex.

SPM seems fond of acronyms, considering how often they are used for its projects, but there is reason for this. Acronyms have excellent name recall that make projects easily identifiable. So we find SPM staffers meeting with a group they call SAVE—for Sectoral Alliance—Volunteers for the Environment—to discuss air pollution, and with another group to discuss PEEP which stands for Paco Environmental Enhancement Program.

SAVE is an assembly of students led by such schools as Philippine Normal University, Technological University of the Philippines and Adamson University. Fifty student organizations comprise SAVE, all with environmental agendas, including waste disposal.

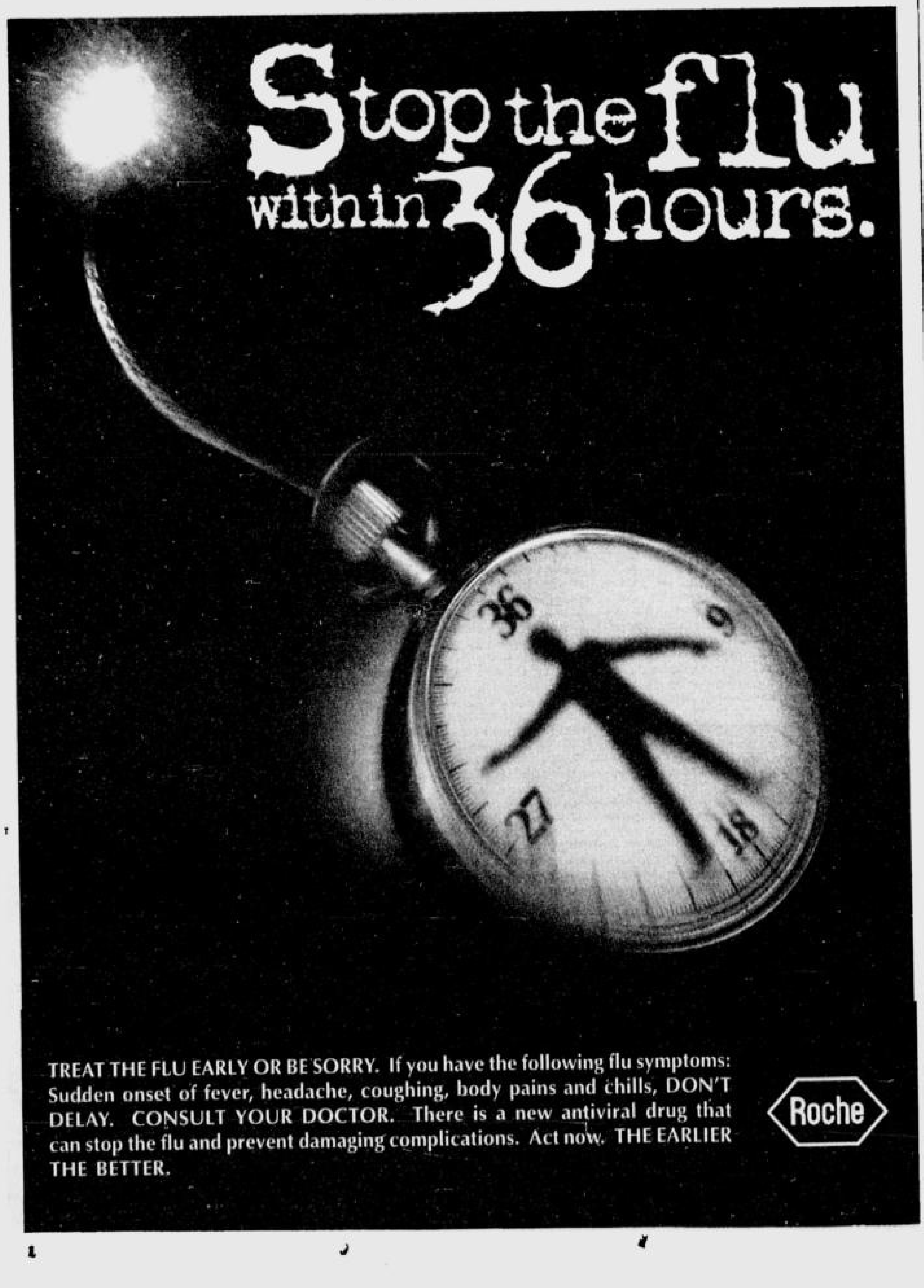
PEEP is composed of organizations in Paco markets, each organization with its own plans for its particular area.

The success of SPM can be traced to the importance it gives to the Pasig's rehabilitation and to the implementation of programs that are all intended for the welfare of involved communities. These are always done in consultation with the people so that goals become clear, old attitudes like apathy more readily changed to greater involvement, making mobilization that much easier.

The organizational structure of SPM has a secretariat at the top (this is Esternon's base). It works closely with the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), formerly PRRP. But no matter who sits as President, SPM's goals and objectives do not change.

The first indication that its work is moving forward, says Esternon, is when the river's water quality has gone up to a "C" rating, which means that aquatic life has returned to the river. This is, of course, the same sign that other NGOs and the PRRC itself are closely watching for. Another indication is when people in SPM communities no longer call for help. That will tell the SPM secretariat that they are now able to solve their own problems and that their training has made them self-reliant.

Somehow, SPM's achievements may be considered a microcosmic analogy for the national government. It is only a small organization, composed of smaller groups, all working together for a well-defined goal that everyone believes in. There is constant consultation and concrete proofs of jobs well done. Aren't these essential ingredients for effective governance?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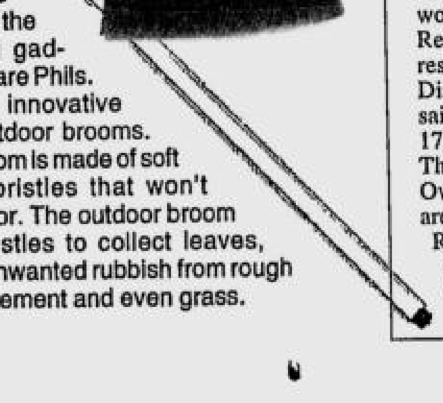
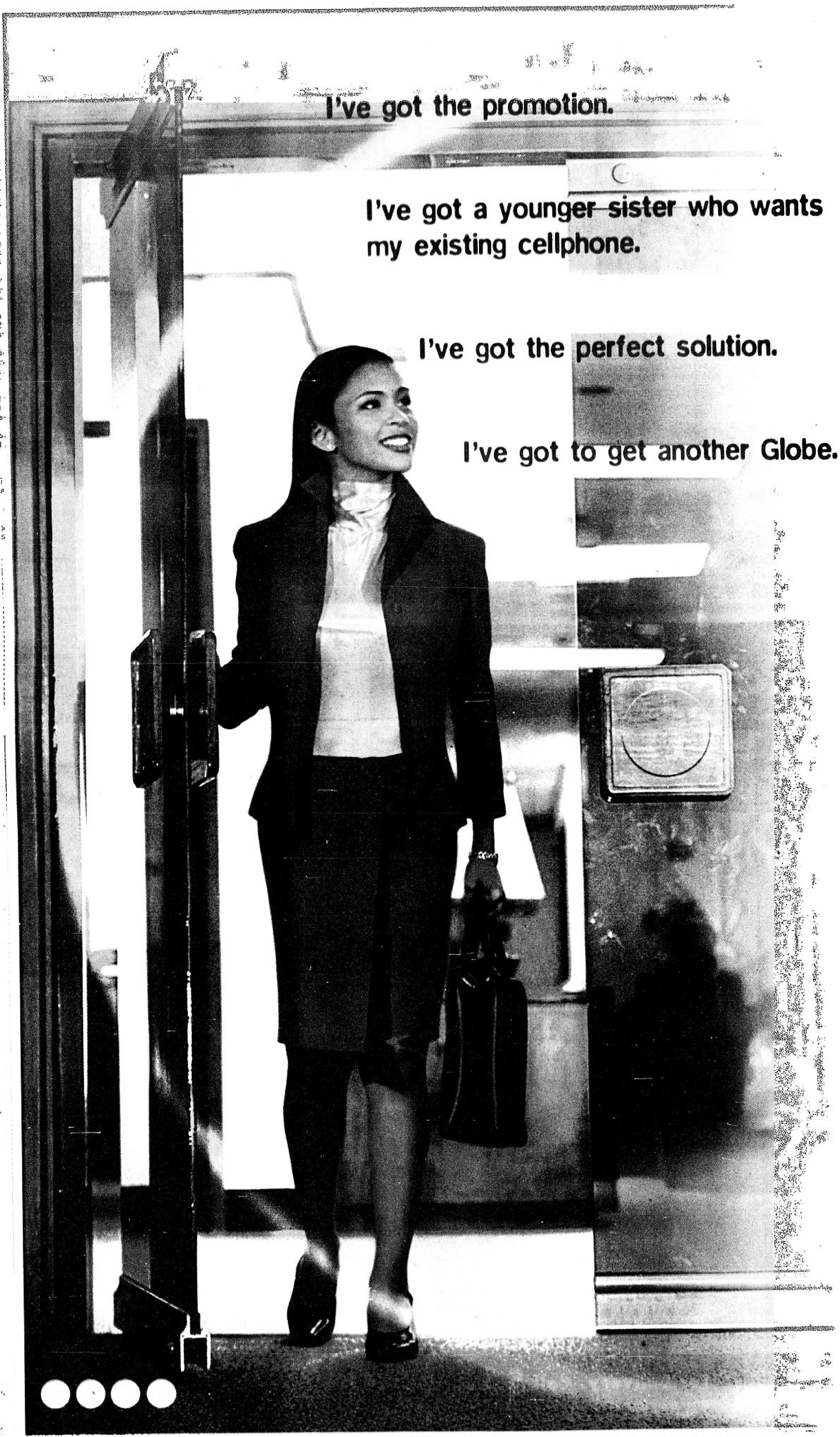


Keeping the dust and windborne rubbish off the floors or patio becomes rigorous when one does not have the right cleaning gadgets. Tupperware Phils. introduces its innovative indoor and outdoor brooms. The indoor broom is made of soft but durable bristles that won't scratch the floor. The outdoor broom has stiffer bristles to collect leaves, pebbles and unwanted rubbish from rough surfaces like cement and even grass.

Greenhearts holds gardening seminars

FAST becoming "the best place to fall in love with gardening," Greenhearts, the Garden Shop, has organized a series of lectures and workshops for beginning gardeners in the city. Resource speakers are authorities in their respective fields: Feb. 3, "Make Your Own Dish Gardens" with Chit Rufo; Feb. 10, "Bonsai for Beginners" with Serapion Metilla; Feb. 17, "Gardening Secrets (How to Have a Green Thumb)" with Vic Chin; Feb. 24, "Grow Your Own Herbs" with Bert Clemena. All seminars are scheduled from 2-5 p.m. at P450 per class.

Reservations are accepted at Greenhearts, 72 Mother Ignacia Ave., QC. Call 411-6868 or 374-3074.


I've got the promotion.
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I've got the perfect solution.
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Quaint garden home in San Juan, Batangas

BY TITA V. GIRON
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA

NANAY Genia Castillo's quaint garden provides the right ambience to her rustic bamboo home which won the national award as "best house made of native materials" in the 1980s. It's a Filipino garden at best where one can still find vanishing native plants and trees, not to mention unique clay pots and lanterns that are hand-molded and fired in antiquated ovens.

MOONFLOWER vines

Her place is the only property along the row of houses in the busy town of San Juan, Batangas that is shielded from public view by blooming moonflower vines, an old garden favorite. According to garden folks, the flowering vine is a sight to behold on nights when the moon is full.

A visit with Nanay Genia in her garden is like stepping back in time. As she pushes her gate and we troop into the tree-crowded garden, thick curtains of *manaog ka irog* trailers greet us. Their gray leaves are a contrast to the red foliage of potted begonia plants hanging from the tree branches.

Palmeras grow near the bamboo porch. They conjure up images of old gardens where the potted palms lined pathways and sides of outdoor stairs. In those days, every garden had these palms. Also reminiscent of those years are bird's nest ferns which the lady of the house planted on the trunks of trees.

A house made of the finest native materials sports a garden that represents the most lush of Philippine flora

VINE with threadlike roots

GROUND tree has unique fruits.

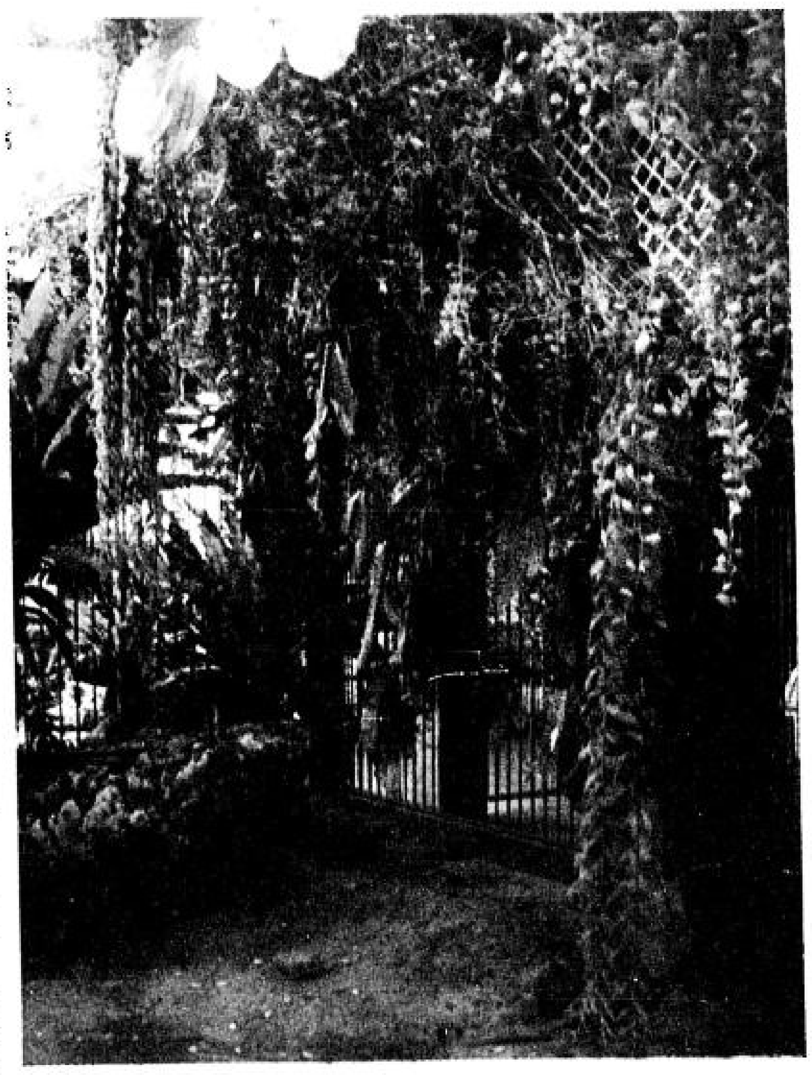
Like most gardens in the years when landscaping art was not yet known, her garden is unplanned. She plants where she fancies, says Ching Sales who introduced us to Eugenia Castillo, the matriarch of San Juan, Batangas. A garden lover herself although a generation younger than Nanay Genia, Ching adds "friendship in gardening has no age barriers." They swap plants and spend hours talking about gardening.

As we go around the garden, we observe that *kakawate* trees dominate the area. On their trunks and branches cling native orchids like the *sanggumay* and the butterfly orchids *tigre* and *mariposa*. We imagine them in bloom: the *sanggumay's* purple flowers with the fruity scent, and the butterfly orchids' subtle sweet fragrance.

AS-IS leaves

Tree of memory

Other trees abound in the garden, but we take special note of the native *macopa*. It brings back memories of bygone days when we used to climb the hardy tree for the sweet and succulent pink fruits. Today, the pink *macopa* of old is, unfortunately, being replaced by imported trees bearing green or white fruits.


NATIVE orchids and *manaog ka irog*

The focal point in the garden, however, is the unique gourd or *marakas* tree bearing interesting round woody fruits on the trunk. Big and round, the unique fruits will stay on the trunk for a long time. We should know because we had a similar tree in the garden during the 1950s. Those days, we couldn't wait to gather the fruits when they were ripe enough to be made into *marakas* or *alcancia*.

Another interesting feature in the garden is the vanishing *as-is* tree (other folks call it the *is-is* tree) whose rough leaves were indispensable to old households. Their endless uses include the following: to clean kitchenware; to polish wooden stairs, floor and windowsill; to smooth the surface of wooden furniture and figurines, and to clean sinks and lavatories.

All told, a day spent visiting with Nanay Genia is worth the seven-hour trip to and from Manila. Time stops once you push through her garden gate and pass the curtain of *manaog ka irog*.

Need we explain why Nanay Genia is as still as feisty and as strong as Batangas womenfolk are known for, even if she's already in her mid-80s?

Her garden is her fountain of youth, her friend Ching tells us.

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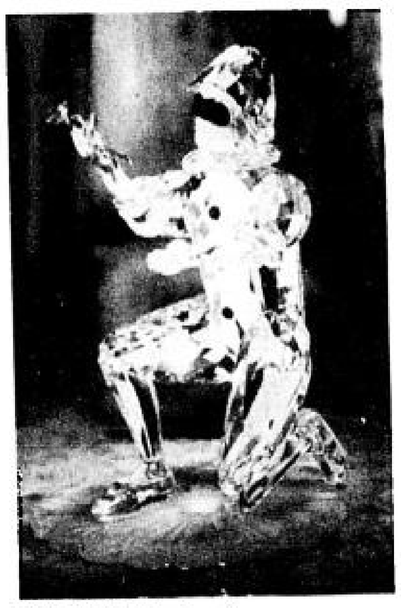
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0064 Series of 2001

The charm of Commedia dell'Arte in crystal

BY DONNIE C. RAMIREZ

THE FASCINATING love triangle between the capricious lady Columbine and her two suitors, the gentle poet Pierrot and the dashing Harlequin, provides the inspiration for Swarovski's Harlequin Trilogy. The three are the scintillating central characters immortalized by the Commedia dell'Arte, the Italian improvised comic theater of the Renaissance which significantly influenced the European theater. Even Shakespeare and Moliere, not able to escape the fascination of the genre, looked to it as a source of inspiration for their works.

The early 18th century saw a new variation in the Commedia dell'Arte with the introduction of a third character named Harlequin. Harlequin is a charming rouge who is wily as he is witty. Relentlessly pursued by Columbine's father Pantalone and his manservant Pedrolino, he nevertheless manages to always elude the irate pursuit through clever tricks and end up being together with his beloved Columbine.


CYRSTAL Harlequin

Inflammable passion

A man of inflammable passion with a penchant for philosophy, Harlequin is also a master of the art of amorous intrigue. He became a hero of the puppet theater in the 19th century, a model for slapstick comedy onstage and in movies, a popular circus figure and a favorite subject for artists, including Pablo Picasso. Truly, he has become the archetypal clown.

Swarovski, the Austrian family company which is regarded as the world's leading manufacturer of cut crystal, launched its Harlequin Trilogy in 1999 with a crystal representation of Pierrot. Captured by artist Adi Stocker in a gracefully melancholic pose, Pierrot was an instant success among Swarovski collectors. He was followed in 2000 by the crystal embodiment of Columbine designed by Gabrielle Stamey. The trilogy is finally completed this year with the launch of the third and most fascinating character in the romantic triangle, the charming rogue Harlequin.

Limited edition

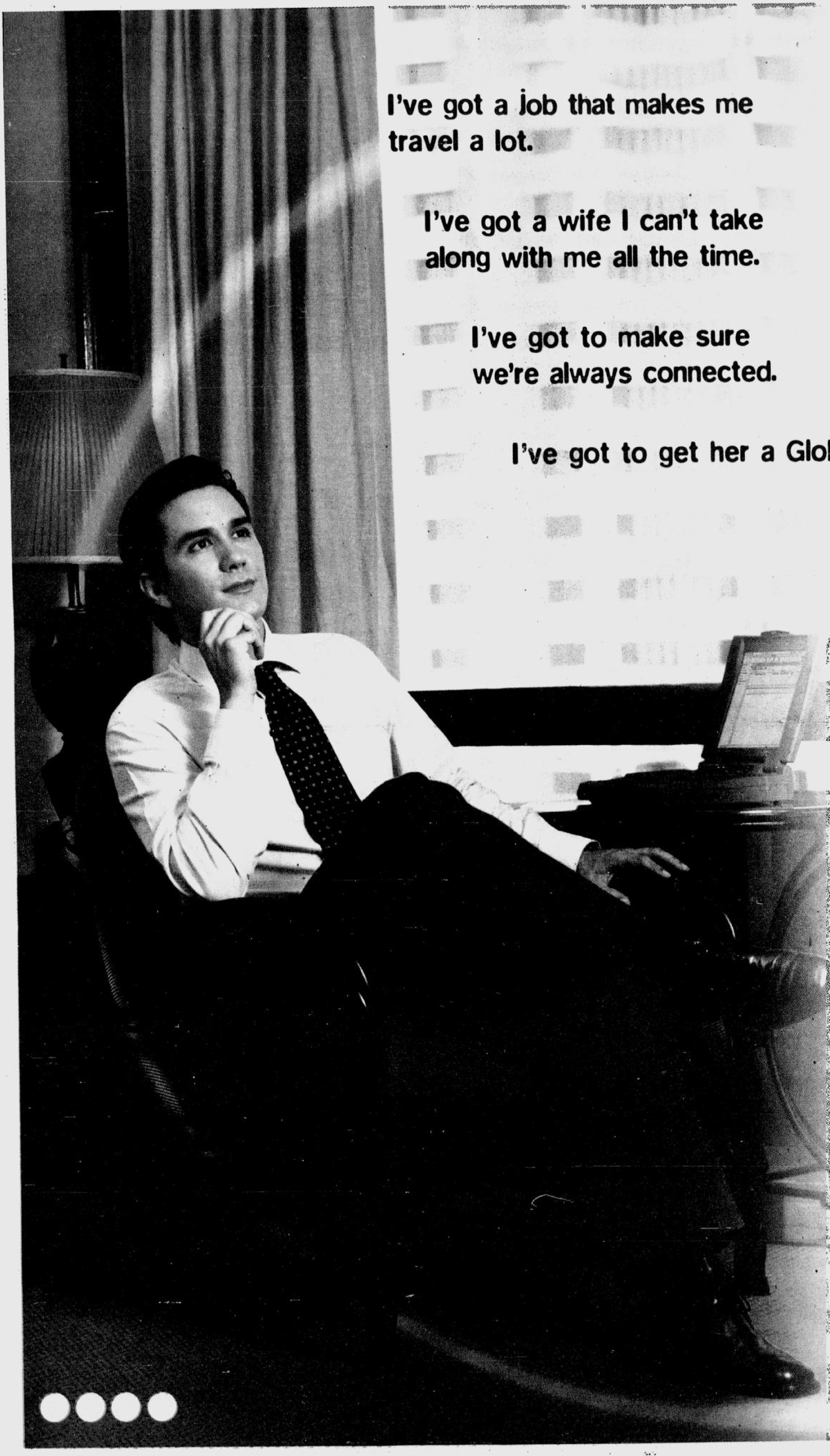
Designer Anton Hirzinger created the figure in full-cut Swarovski crystal, dressed in the stylized costume of the Rococo Period. Designed to complement the two earlier issues, the Harlequin figure is portrayed in a pose of adoration. Confident of victory, he lays a ruby red crystal rose at the feet of his lady love. His face, as well as the marguerite on which he kneels are made of transparent matt crystal. His costume is decorated with pompoms made of emerald green crystals and like Pierrot and Columbine before him, he wears a crystal mask which gives an enigmatic presence. The Harlequin figure measures 135 x 90 x 50 mm.

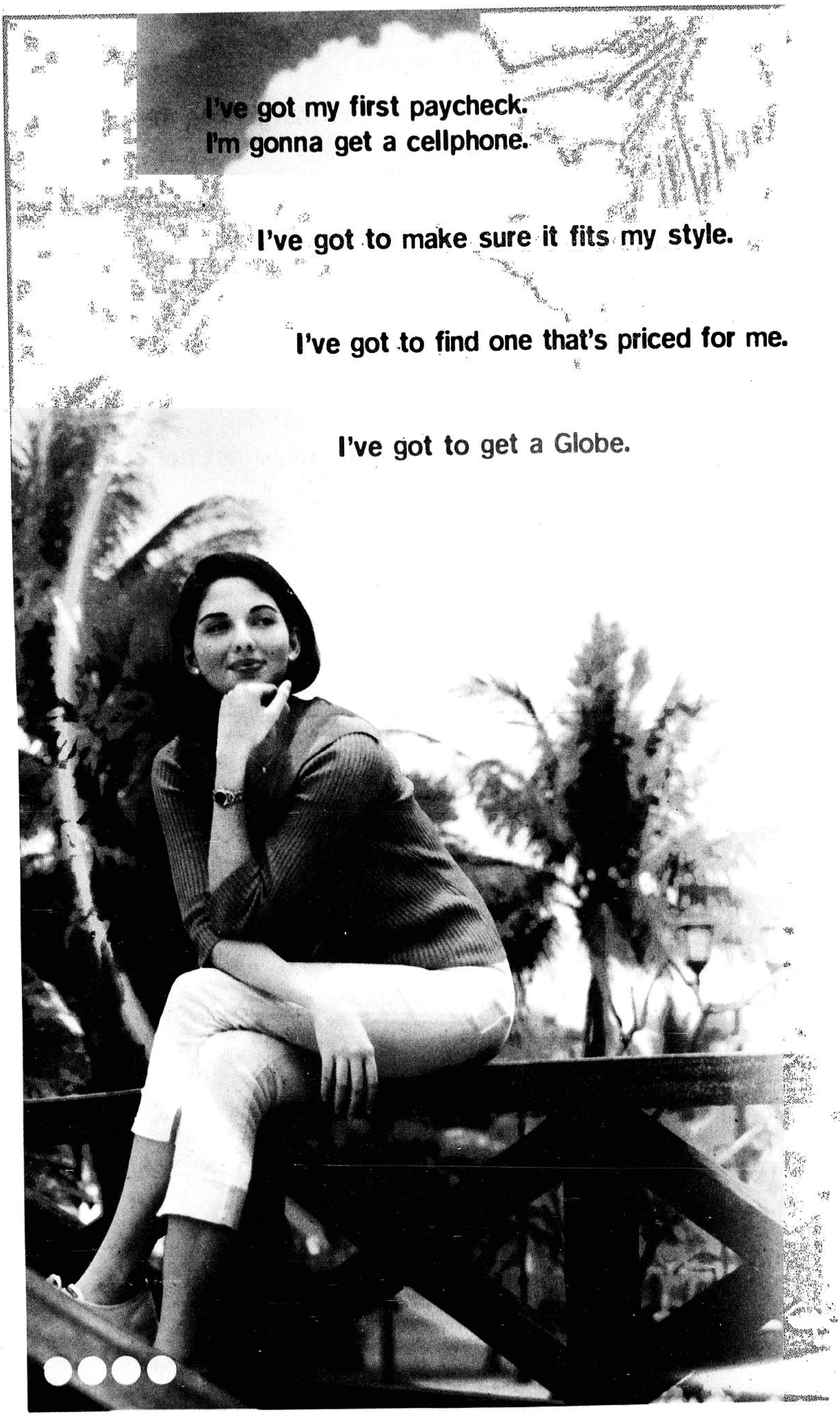
The curtain rises for Swarovski's Harlequin Trilogy

The limited edition Harlequin is produced exclusively for members of the Swarovski Collectors Society (SCS). It comes with the Swarovski logo, the year of issue and the designer's initials, together with a certificate signed by Swarovski and the designer. Options include a Collector's Display Case in the form of an oval matt black stage with a draped curtain in titian red held in place by two sparkling crystal stones, and a crystal title plaque engraved with the name Harlequin, as well as the designer's name and the edition date.

The Harlequin launch was held recently a the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, with Mabel Lim, divisional sales manager of the Swarovski Singapore Trading Pte., Ltd., as special guest. The presentation was highlighted by excerpts from the Commedia dell'Arte performed by members of Kuala Lumpur's Dance Nation Group.

The Harlequin figure is priced at P13,200. The Collector's Display costs P1,650 and the crystal title plaque goes for P1,100. Two miniature crystal swans and a bag each of mini-crystal hearts and marguerites are given free with the purchase of the complete set. The Harlequin Trilogy, as well as other Swarovski products, are available at all Rustan's Department Stores nationwide. Applications for the Swarovski Collectors Society are also accepted in the Swarovski boutiques in Rustan's.


I've got a job that makes me travel a lot.
I've got a wife I can't take along with me all the time.
I've got to make sure we're always connected.
I've got to get her a Globe.


I've got my first paycheck.
I'm gonna get a cellphone.
I've got to make sure it fits my style.
I've got to find one that's priced for me.
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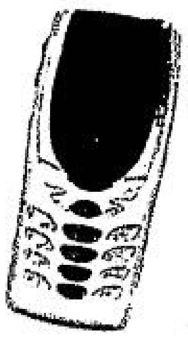

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Nokia 8250	17,000	15,000	15,000	12,000	9,000	15,000	13,000	11,000	9,000
Siemens S40	15,000	13,000	13,000	10,000	7,000	13,000	11,000	9,000	7,000
Nokia 3310	6,000	4,000	4,000	1,000	FREE	4,000	2,000	FREE	FREE
Philips Azalis	5,000	3,000	3,000	FREE	FREE	3,000	1,000	FREE	FREE
Nokia 5110i	3,500	1,500	1,500	FREE	FREE	1,500	FREE	FREE	FREE
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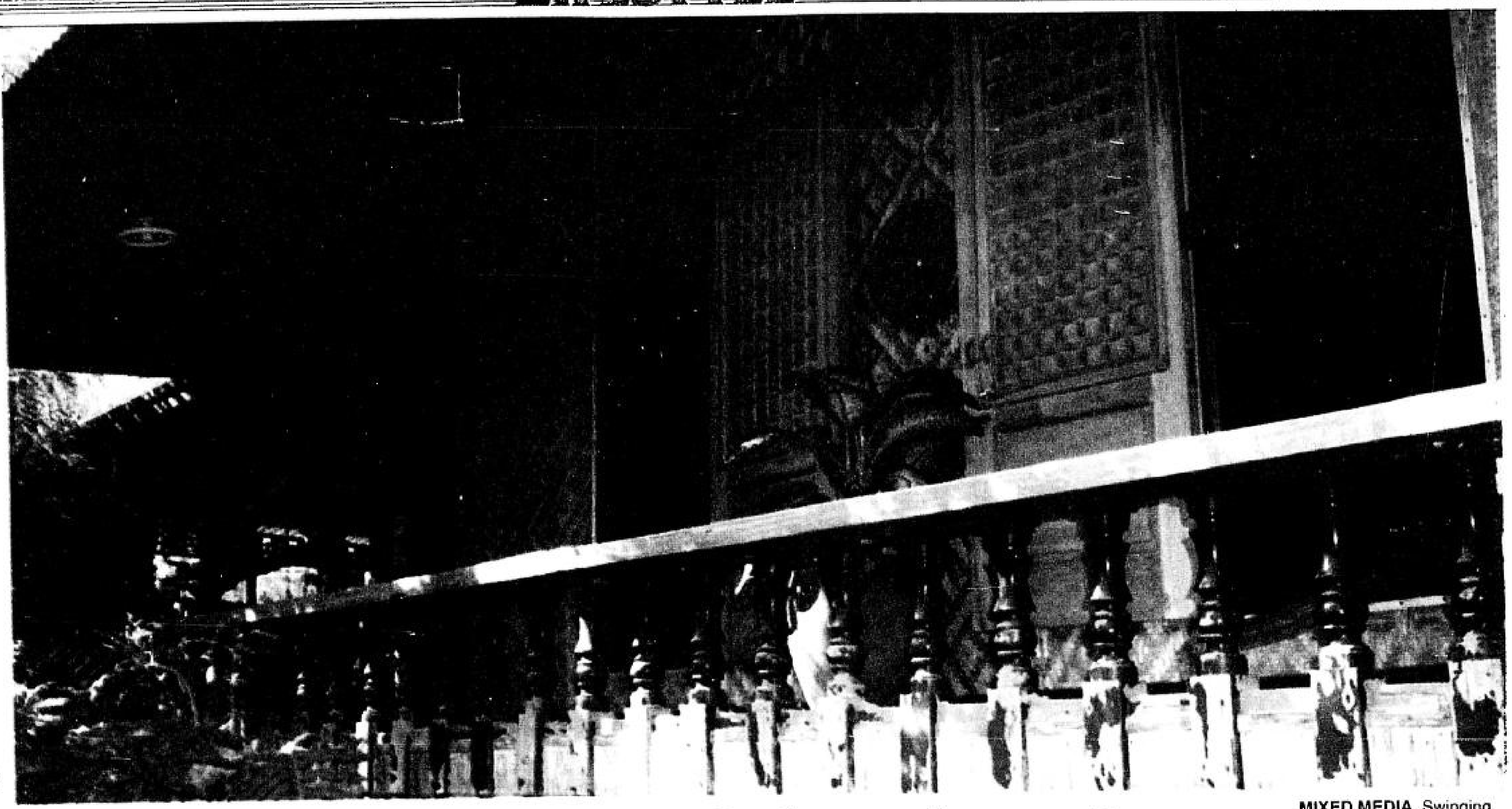
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0051, Series of 2001

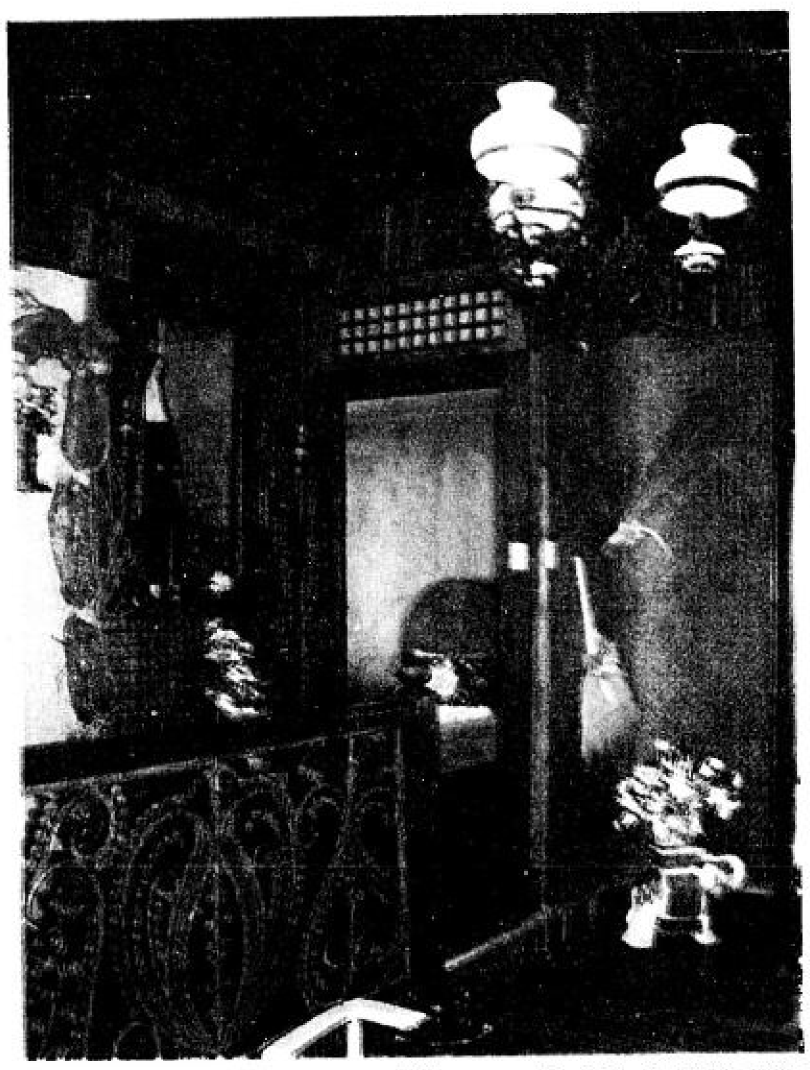


MIXED MEDIA. Swinging wood and *capiz* doors allow air to flow freely in this house made chiefly of bamboo and *sawali.*

Eugenia Castillo's bamboo and 'sawali' house survives the wear and tear of time, a design statement in itself

Ageless and graceful as bamboo

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PHOTO DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA



TEXTURED FINISH. The owner opted for sparse furnishing to highlight the interior made of bamboo, *sawali* and coconut. Note the image of Sta. Rita de Casia in a wooden niche set in a wall covered with cut coconut shell and *capiz.*

NOT a few people have marveled at Eugenia Castillo's Filipino-inspired home made primarily of bamboo and *sawali.* Even her late husband Ramon, when he was alive, couldn't help but be awed by the structure. Ironically, when Castillo, *Nanay* Genia to friends and neighbors in San Juan, Batangas, first embarked on building her dream house more than two decades ago, Ramon scoffed at the idea.

Apart from being impractical, the husband reasoned, the house would cost an arm and a leg to build and maintain. Ramon, then the town's vice mayor, wanted a more conventional structure made of wood and concrete where he could entertain friends and supporters. But Genia, now an octogenarian, would hear none of it. After endless debates, the lady of the house eventually prevailed, and Ramon eventually was only too glad he listened.

"My husband didn't get the idea at first," recalls Genia in Filipino. "He was too concerned about the expenses."

Well, he was partly right. Not only was the house costly and labor-intensive, it also took a long time to finish. But Genia showed his skeptic of a husband that, indeed, it could be done. When Ramon finally saw the finished product more than a year later, he lost no time inviting his friends to come over. The gesture was good enough for Genia.

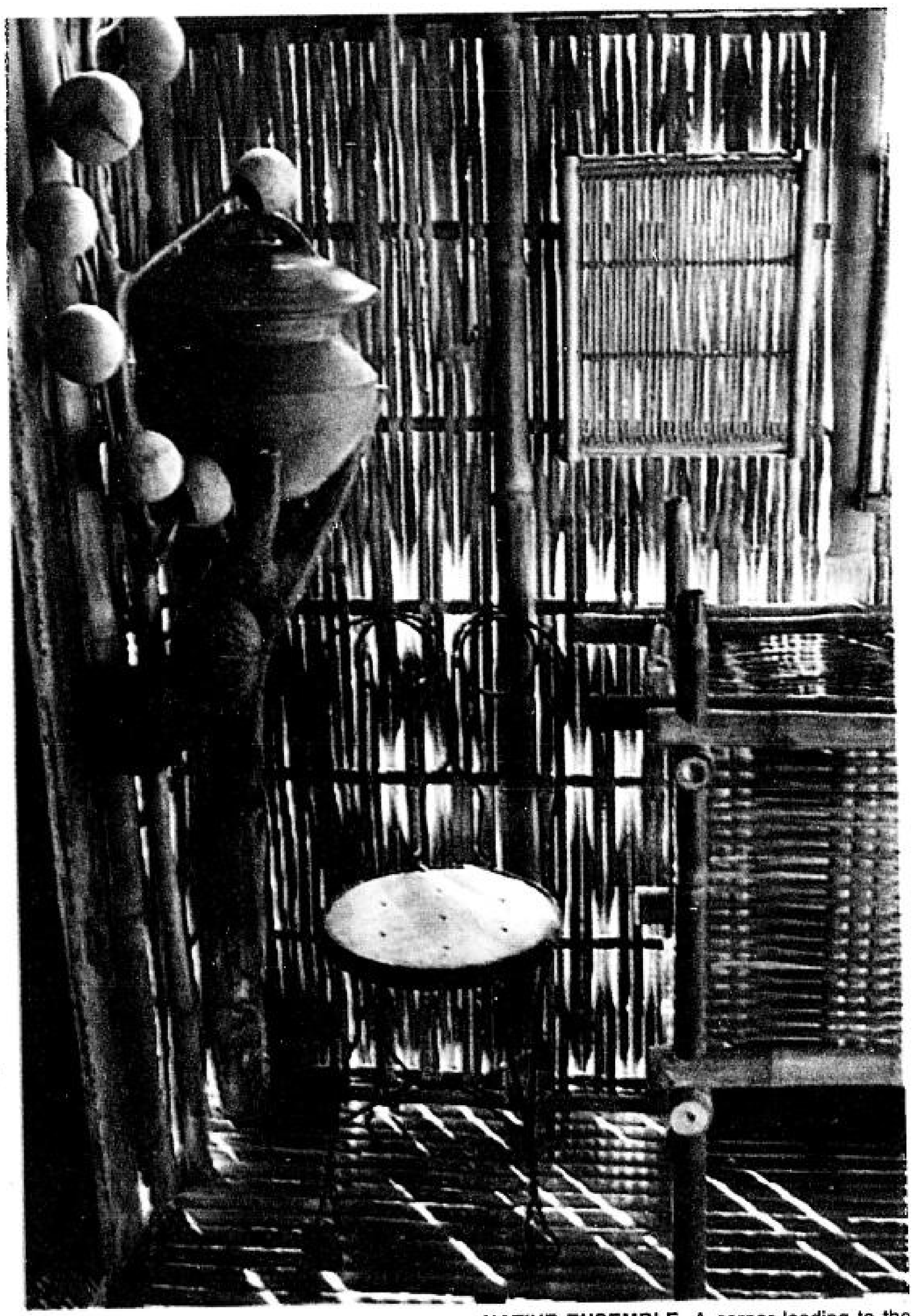
"He was really proud of this house," she says fondly. "And he always credited me for it."

Genia's taste and attention to detail were further affirmed in 1981 by an award-giving body headed by then First Lady Imelda Marcos. The Castillo home and nine others were cited for their ingenuity in construction and the use of native materials. Genia had to travel from San Juan to the posh Mandarin Oriental in Makati to personally receive her award from her imeldific idol.

Visitors to this day are still awed by the bamboo structure, portions of which have begun to fade and age with time, shrouded by tall trees and ornamental plants from the national highway several meters away (***See related story***). Aside from ensuring her privacy, the lush vegetation muffles noise and filters dust from invading her home.

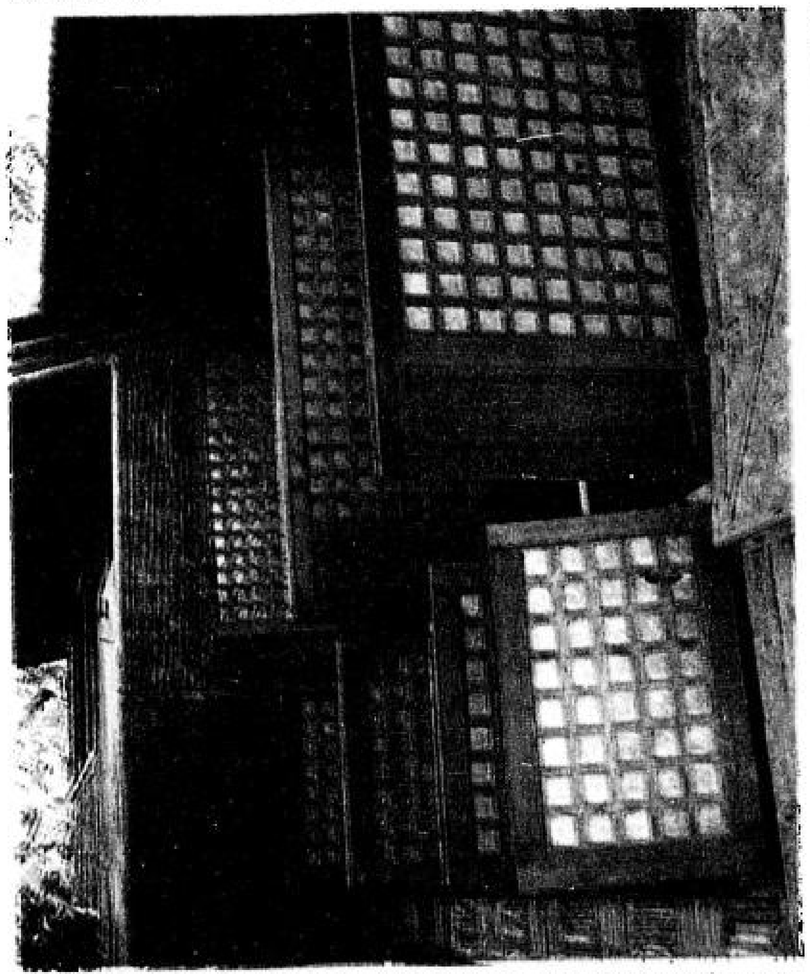
The Castillos hired an architect to ensure the structure's stability, but Genia oversaw the details. She scoured every interior design magazine she could get her hands on for ideas—not an easy feat in a remote town. The result: an airy dwelling that combines

AGELESS/ p.C9



NATIVE ENSEMBLE. A corner leading to the kitchen is made of bamboo slats. Empty coconut shells beside a *banga* double as *tabo* and accent pieces.

HIGH MAINTENANCE. Aside from the floor, a ledge by the terrace is also made of simple but expensive bamboo slats. Even the Castillos' Christmas tree eschews pinecones and satin balls in favor of native accent pieces made of wood and *sinamay.*



WINDOW DRESSING. Swinging panels made of wood and *capiz* come in two sizes.

Ageless and graceful as bamboo

(From page C8)

the rustic charm of a Filipino country home with all the modern-day trappings of a city dwelling.

Light materials

Nipa roofing had to give way to sturdier GI sheets for practical reasons, but every part of the house, including the bamboo floor raised a few feet from the ground, is made of light materials save for the concrete kitchen and two bathrooms. A section of the living room wall behind the kitchen is made of bricks. Bamboo slats also shield the *pamingalan* from the outside.

Thanks to numerous windows, Genia has no need for an aircon since her house allows air to flow freely. With no screen to ruin the interior and keep buzzing insects out, a mosquito net has become indispensable.

"I've always wanted to live in a *bahay kubo* ever since," she shares. "Indeed, it can be quite expensive to maintain such a home. It's a good thing I don't have to spend too much on electricity."

A single slat of bamboo, for instance, needs to be replaced as soon as it rots or breaks into two. All Genia has to do is seek the help of friends living in the farm. The town also has its share of craftsmen and artists who have helped turn Genia's dream into reality. It's a good thing there are still plenty of cheap raw materials, chiefly bamboo, still available in San Juan.

A short plight of stairs again made of bamboo leads to the terrace and into a living room separated by several sliding wood and *capiz* panels. Several swinging and sliding windows are also made of the same combination of materials. Bamboo eaves, cut in half and held together by rattan strips tied to bigger, longer bamboo poles, shelter the terrace from the elements.

Security was also probably on top of Ramon's mind when they moved in. With its huge windows sans iron grills, the house made of flimsy materials is any burglar's dream. Ramon's fears were unfounded. It really pays to have earned the respect of one's neighbors. No outsider has dared broken into their abode so far.

One of the house's chief attractions is the mixed use of indigenous materials: sections of the wall are made up, for instance, of *sawali* woven in various hues and styles. Doors and certain sections of the ceiling are covered either in *sawali* or *banig* and framed by bamboo appliqué, cut, spliced and varnished to form various geometric shapes.

The use of mixed media spills over to a wooden handrail accented by curlicue patterns made of wicker that separates the bedrooms from the living room walls. Furniture pieces, made mostly of wood or bamboo, are decidedly light to keep bamboo slats from buckling under their weight.

Easy to maintain

"If not for the termites," Genia says, "it's easy to maintain bamboo and wooden furniture."

A maid simply buffs the bamboo floor with a damp cloth. The same process is repeated on "naked" or unvarnished furniture pieces. Genia occasionally gives them a good rubbing of *as-is* leaves to bring out the wood's fine grains.

But with the advent of commercial furniture polish, the plant, with its fine, sandpaper-like leaves, is fast disappearing in San Juan and nearby towns. Genia, like her mother and grandmother then, still swears by its effectiveness. But the plant has its limits. If you ever rub *as-is* on varnished surfaces, you won't be able to bring back the original sheen.

Pieces of bamboo were cut and nailed to certain corners of the wall to add texture, as if the house is still in need of any. Genia has wisely limited the number of furniture pieces to minimize clutter.

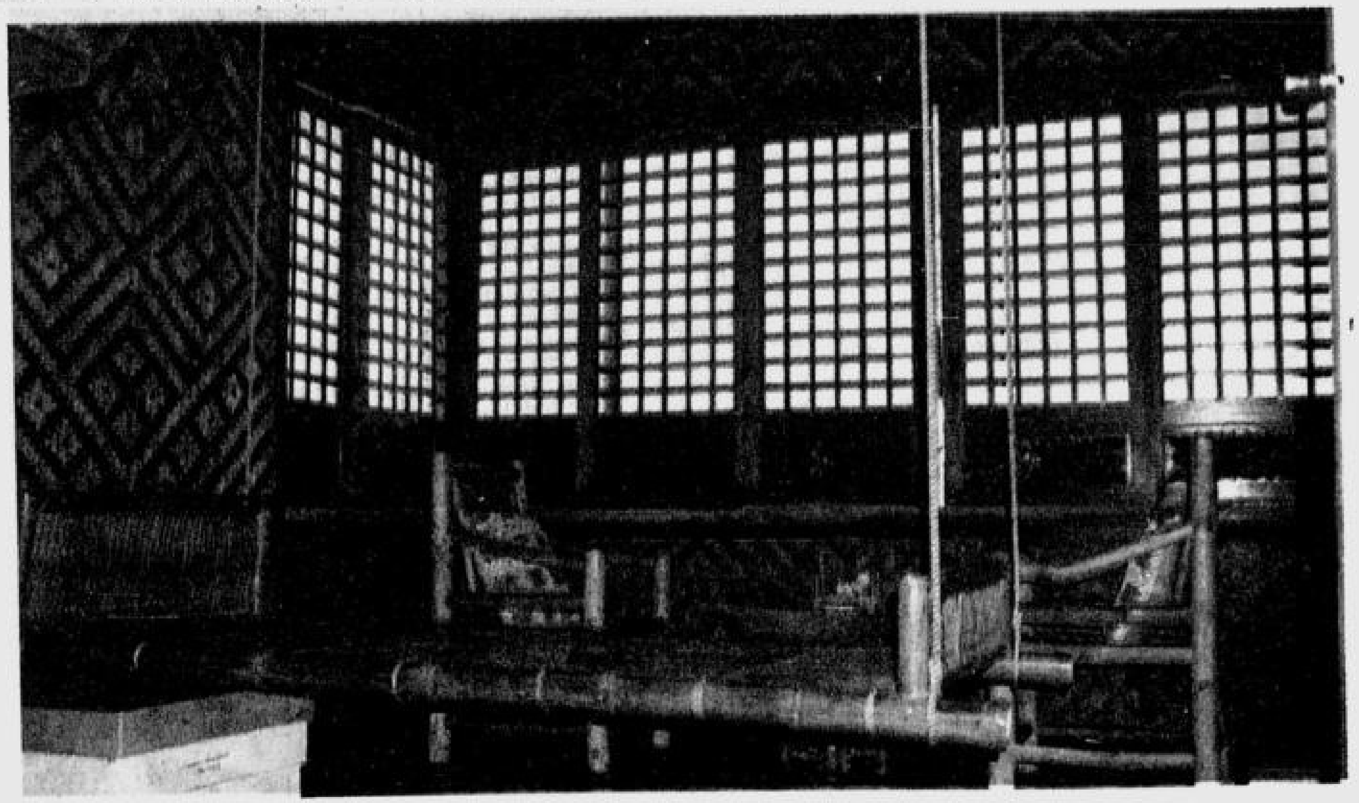
A ledge by the terrace, for instance, also doubles as a long bench made of bamboo slats. Another conversation piece is a swinging bamboo bed, its four extended corners suspended by ropes tied to wooden beams concealed by the *sawali* ceiling.

Part of the wall leading to the second bedroom doubles as a niche featuring an image of Sta. Rita de Casia, Genia's patron saint. Pieces of cut and polished coconut shell and *capiz* set this particular section apart from the *sawali* walls.

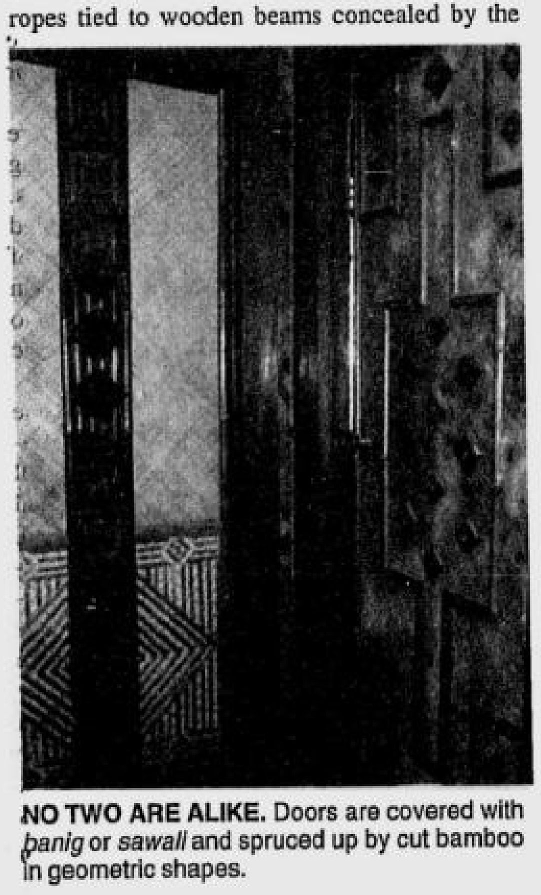
"Maintaining this kind of house involves a great deal of work," Genia concedes. "Pesky termites make it more difficult when they start chewing on beams and walls. Sometimes, I've had to replace certain areas of the house to keep it from falling apart. But this is how I want to live. I won't settle for anything else."

Well, nor did husband Ramon.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



A SWINGING bamboo bed for those lazy afternoon siestas



NO TWO ARE ALIKE. Doors are covered with *banig* or *sawali* and spruced up by cut bamboo in geometric shapes.

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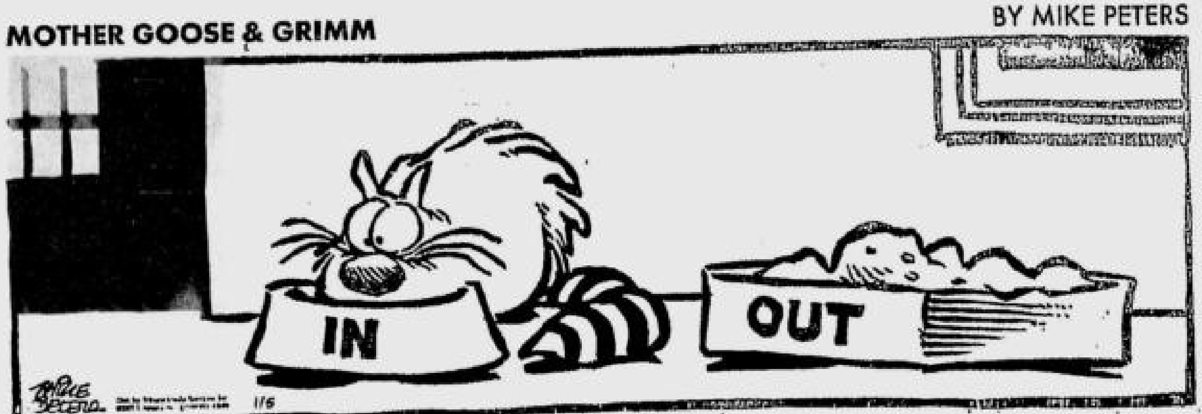
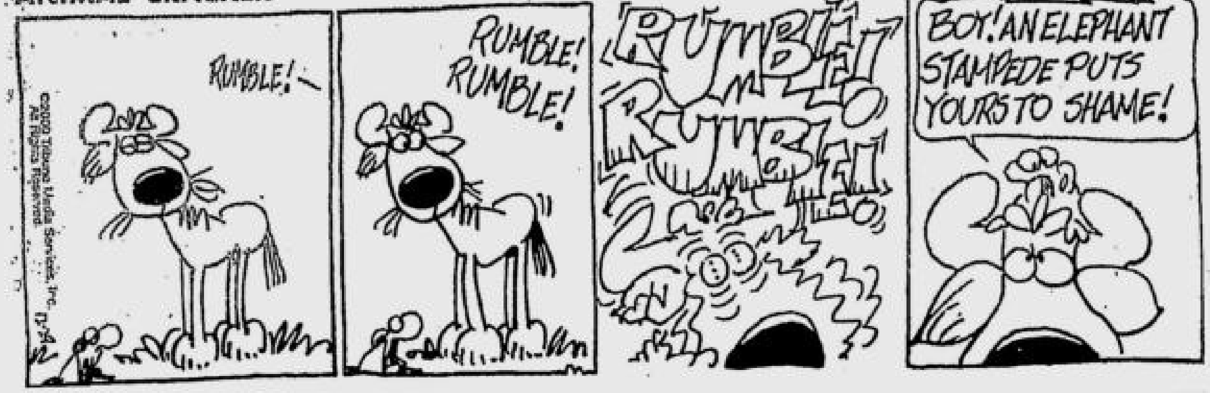
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


IN
OUT
MIKE PETERS
1/6

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


RUMBLE!
RUMBLE! RUMBLE!
RUMBLE! RUMBLE!
BOY! AN ELEPHANT STAMPEDE PUTS YOURS TO SHAME!
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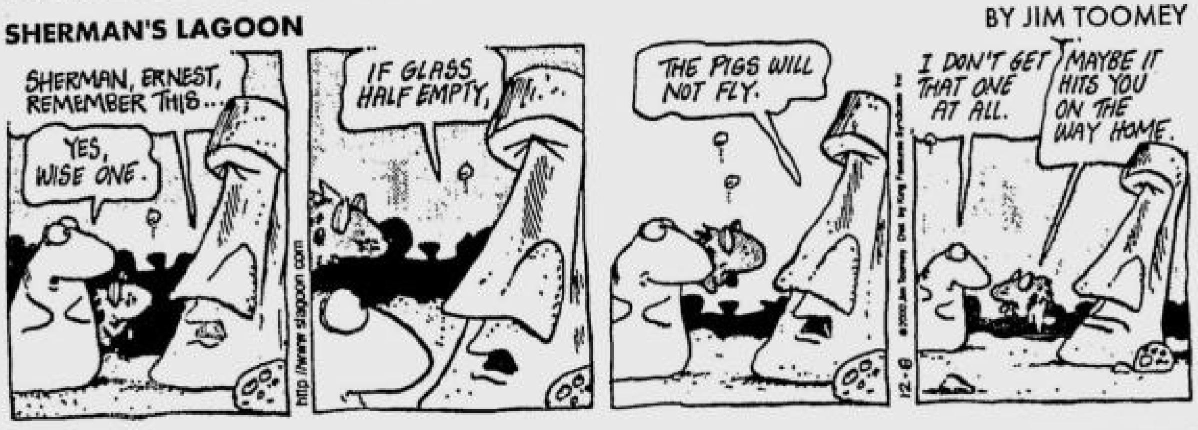
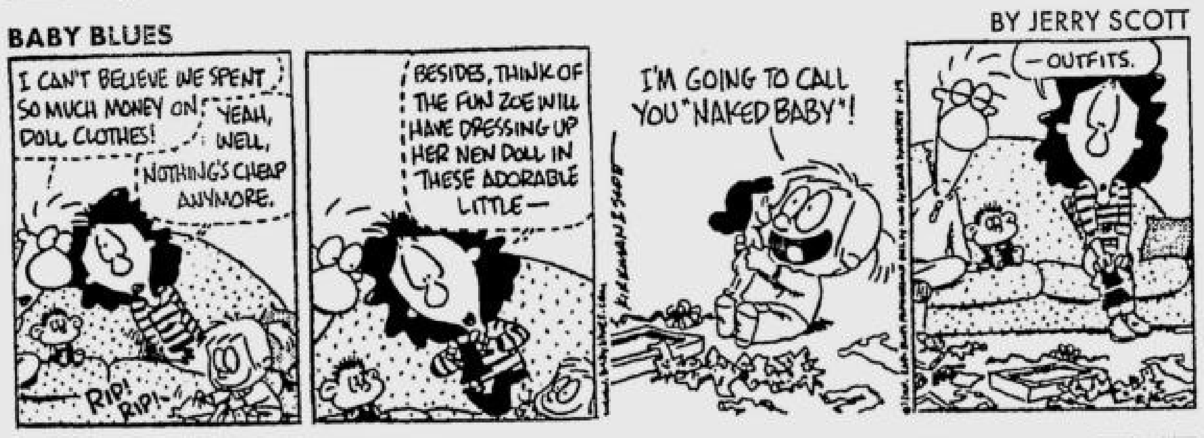
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SHERMAN, ERNEST, REMEMBER THIS...
YES, WISE ONE.
IF GLASS HALF EMPTY,
THE PIGS WILL NOT FLY.
I DON'T GET THAT ONE AT ALL.
MAYBE IT HITS YOU ON THE WAY HOME.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-8

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I CAN'T BELIEVE WE SPENT SO MUCH MONEY ON DOLL CLOTHES!
YEAH, WELL, NOTHING'S CHEAP ANYMORE.
RIP! RIP!
BESIDES, THINK OF THE FUN ZOE WILL HAVE DRESSING UP HER NEW DOLL IN THESE ADORABLE LITTLE—
I'M GOING TO CALL YOU "NAKED BABY"!
—OUTFITS.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Christie Brinkley, Farrah Fawcett, Tom Smothers, Sean Elliott, Liz Smith, Graham Nash
Happy Birthday: He who hesitates is lost, and that will be the case if you don't act on your gut feelings this year. Make the alterations necessary to improve your life. You will be happy only if you follow your own path. Being true to yourself will be the key to your success. Your numbers: 9, 12, 15, 17, 22, 30

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Love can be hot as long as you avoid getting trapped in a one-sided relationship. You will be lazy and lack discipline when it comes to your fitness program. Push yourself a little harder if you don't want to gain back those extra pounds.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Concentrate on your domestic chores before your family complains about your lack of helpfulness. You may feel a little under the weather. An early evening should help rejuvenate you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You can meet people with influence if you attend intellectual events. Don't exaggerate your talents. You may find yourself embarrassed.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Erratic behavior by you or your partner will lead to sudden changes in your living arrangements. Consider going for professional help if you want to improve this union.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Opportunities for financial gains are prominent. Lady Luck is with you, and your insight into making the right choices will be advantageous.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't put off a doctor's appointment just because you are feeling a little better. Stress is probably at the root of your problem. Rest will be necessary.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A romantic encounter will be stressful. Mixing business with pleasure would be fun, but highly dangerous as well. You must make some serious choices before you ruin your reputation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your hard work will pay off. You should feel satisfied and confident about your professional direction. Don't let the negativity of friends or relatives cause you to question yourself or your goals.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Start those hobbies you've been thinking about. One of them may turn into a lucrative proposition. You can make personal changes that will enhance your appearance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Deception is apparent when dealing with family or children. You may want to put some energy into beautifying your living quarters. Make everyone pitch in.

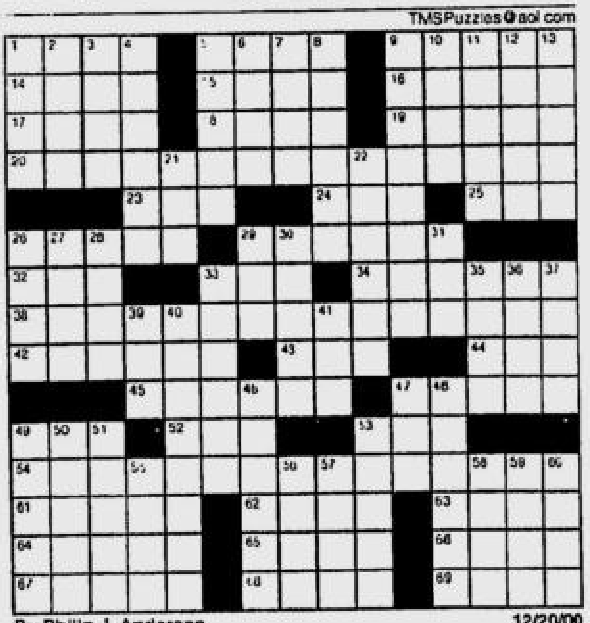
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Travel and romance will go hand-in-hand. Your warm heart will attract many new acquaintances. Get involved in competitive sports. You need a challenge.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't take chances while operating machinery or equipment. You will be misunderstood if you aren't precise in your explanations to others.

Birthday Baby: You are a serious, cautious and caring individual. You want everything to be done just right. You are innovative, inventive and interested in what everyone else is doing.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

12/20/00

ACROSS

1 Bar in a tub
5 Amorphous amount
9 Artie and Irwin
14 Highland Gaelic
15 Oklahoma crooner
16 "Titanic" room
17 Riga resident
18 Hertz rival
19 Wear away
20 Consider, casually
23 Conger
24 Historic period
25 Conclusion
26 Coral isle
29 Leave in the lurch
32 Russian space station
33 Choice: abbr.
34 Superlatively simpatico
38 Consider, negatively
42 Former Egyptian leader
43 Speck
44 Jazz style
45 Frightened
47 Coarse files
49 King of Judea
52 Golf-ball position
53 Outer edge
54 Consider, speculatively
61 Shroud of __
62 Soot-covered
63 Baloney manufacturer?
64 Grenoble's river
65 Stalk
66 Poet Pound
67 Boxed in?
68 Make a point
69 Pack down

DOWN

1 Ego
2 Pitcher Hershiser
3 __ Spumante
4 Small seabird
5 Donnybrook
6 Jacob's third son
7 Last bio?
8 Strikes crushingly
9 Plot outline
10 Mata __
11 Residence
12 Grow broad
13 Slammin' Sammy
21 Part of GTE
22 Writer Hannah
26 Last word in prayers
27 Louise of "Gilligan's Island"
28 Meal scraps
29 Narcs
30 Slur over
31 Fort Worth sch.
33 Nautical passage
35 Flows back
36 Organ pull
37 Cooking meas.
39 Snaky character
40 Laid back
41 Indicate the go-ahead
46 Go over again
47 Carnival city, casually
48 Charm
49 Garret
50 The March King
51 Lew of "Dr. Kildare" movies
53 Greeting-card message
55 Electrical cable
56 Regarding
57 Next
58 Setting for sphinxes
59 Injure
60 Pitfall

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

M	E	T	E	■	C	O	R	T	■	A	S	S	A	M
I	C	E	T	■	L	I	A	R	■	S	H	A	N	E
C	H	E	C	K	I	N	G	A	C	C	O	U	N	T
E	O	N	■	I	N	K	S	■	O	O	D	L	E	S
■	■	■	S	C	I	■	■	S	O	T	■	■	■	■
B	L	A	N	K	C	H	E	C	K	■	B	A	R	R
R	U	P	E	E	■	O	L	E	S	■	O	B	I	E
I	N	N	E	R	■	N	I	N	■	S	N	A	P	S
B	A	E	R	■	A	C	T	I	■	E	M	C	E	E
E	R	A	S	■	C	H	E	C	K	P	O	I	N	T
■	■	■	■	P	R	O	■	■	O	T	T	■	■	■
A	S	P	I	R	E	■	A	T	R	I	■	N	B	A
C	H	I	N	E	S	E	C	H	E	C	K	E	R	S
M	U	T	T	S	■	S	H	E	A	■	E	M	I	T
E	T	H	O	S	■	P	E	N	N	■	Y	O	G	A

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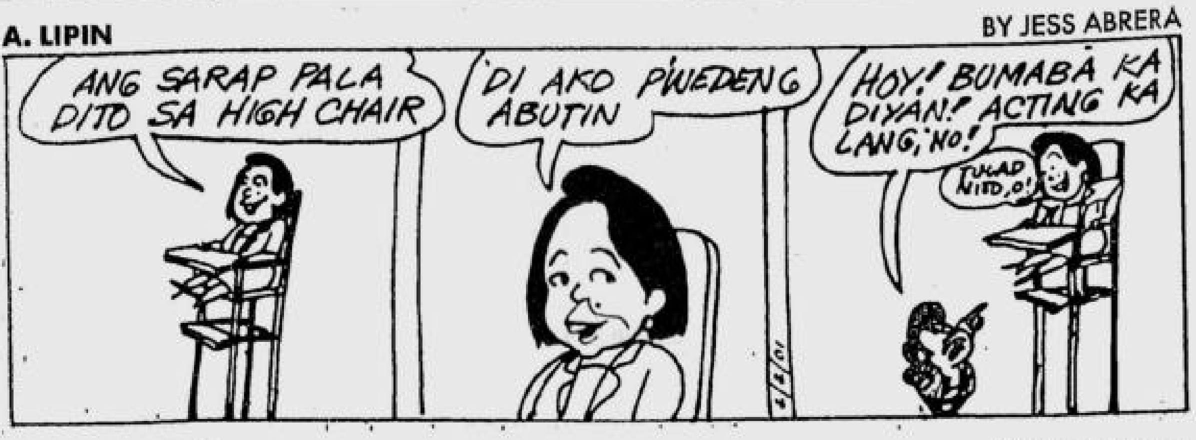
12/20/00

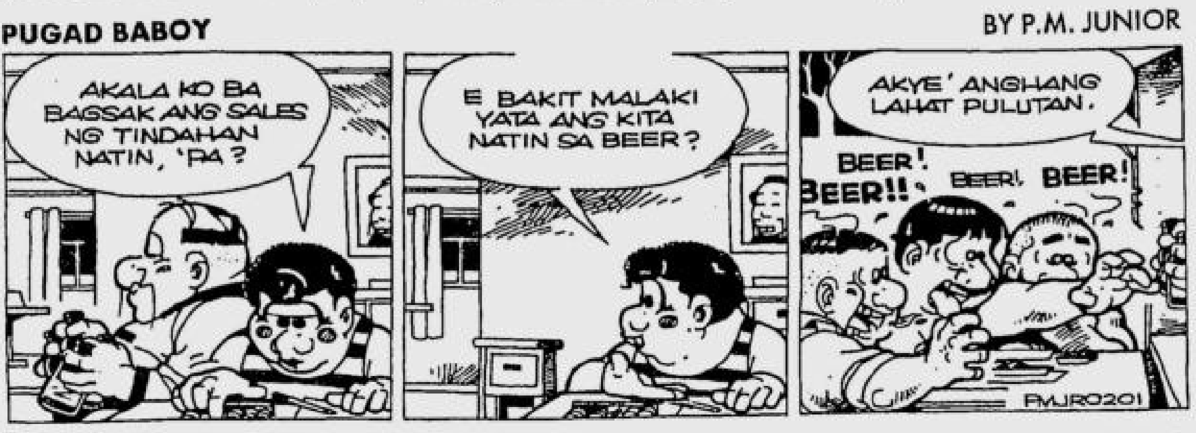
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG SARAP PALA DITO SA HIGH CHAIR
'DI AKO PWEDENG ABUTIN
HOY! BUMABA KA DIYAN! ACTING KA LANG, NO!
TULAD NITO, O!

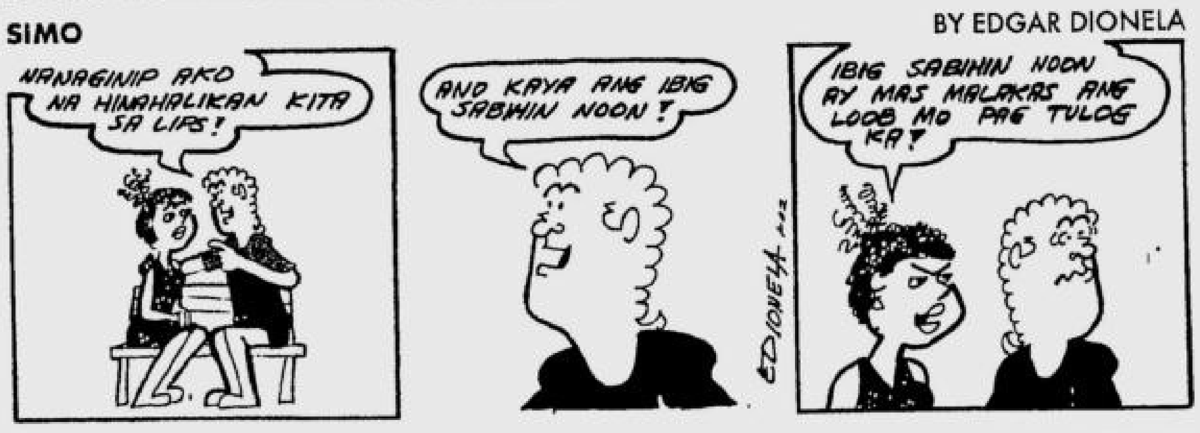
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AKALA KO BA BAGSAK ANG SALES NG TINDAHAN NATIN, 'PA?
E BAKIT MALAKI YATA ANG KITA NATIN SA BEER?
AKYE' ANGHANG LAHAT PULUTAN.
BEER! BEER!! BEER! BEER!
PMJR0201

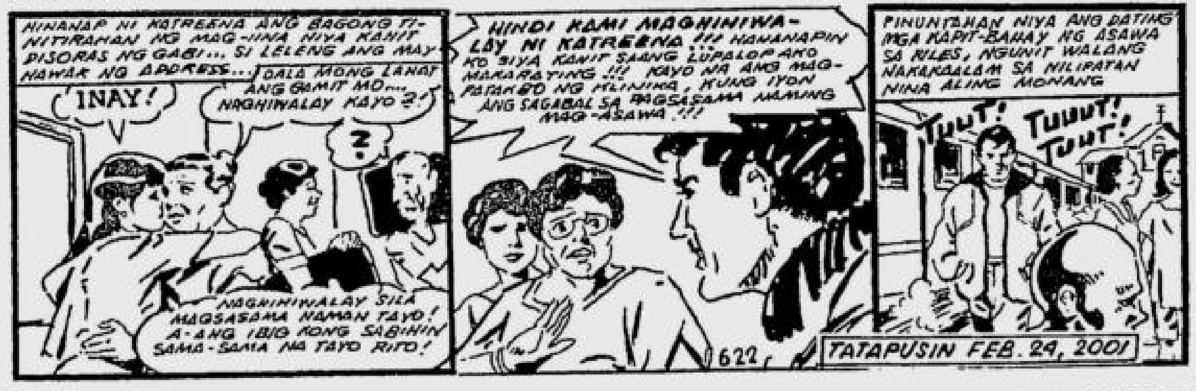
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NANAGINIP AKO NA HINAHALIKAN KITA SA LIPS!
ANO KAYA ANG IBIG SABIHIN NOON?
IBIG SABIHIN NOON AY MAS MALAKAS ANG LOOB MO PAG TULOG KA?
EDIONELA

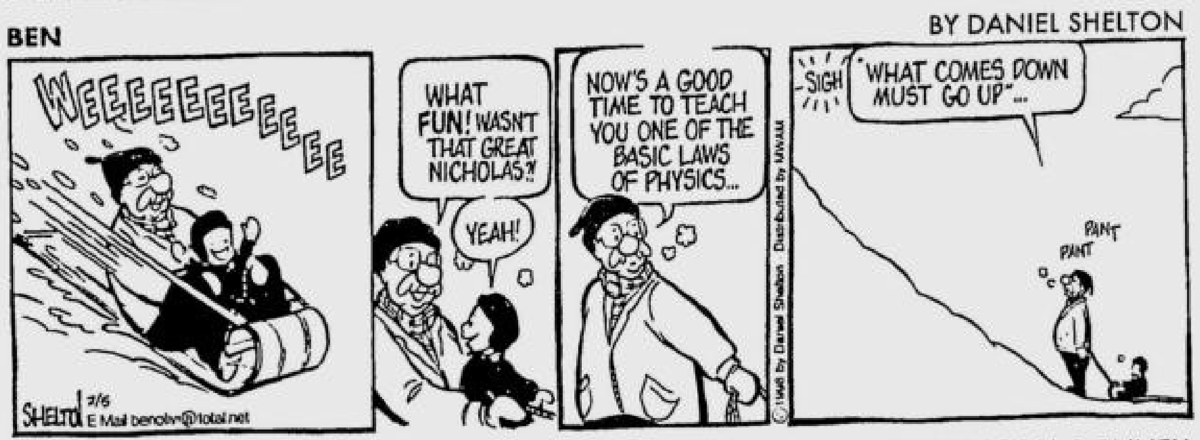
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


HINANAP NI KATREENA ANG BAGONG TINITIRAHAN NG MAG-IINA NIYA KAHIT DISORAS NG GABI... SI LELENG ANG MAY HAWAK NG ADDRESS...
INAY!
DALA MONG LAHAT ANG GAMIT MO.... NAGHIWALAY KAYO?
?
NAGHIHIWALAY SILA MAGSASAMA NAMAN TAYO! A-ANG IBIG KONG SABIHIN SAMA-SAMA NA TAYO RITO!
HINDI KAMI MAGHIHIWALAY NI KATREENA!!! HAHANAPIN KO SIYA KAHIT SAANG LUPALOP AKO MAKARATING!!! KAYO NA ANG MAGPATAKBO NG KLINIKA, KUNG IYON ANG SAGABAL SA PAGSASAMA NAMING MAG-ASAWA!!!
622
PINUNTAHAN NIYA ANG DATING MGA KAPIT-BAHAY NG ASAWA SA RILES, NGUNIT WALANG NAKAKAALAM SA NILIPATAN NINA ALING MONANG
TUUT! TUUUT! TUUT!
TATAPUSIN FEB. 24, 2001

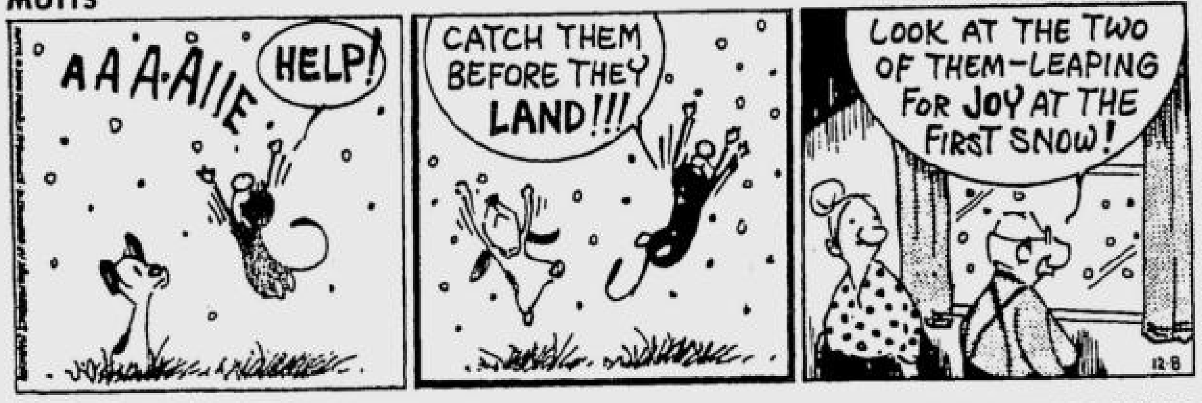
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WEEEEEEEEEEEEE
SHELTON 2/6 E Mail benofvn@total.net
WHAT FUN! WASN'T THAT GREAT NICHOLAS?
YEAH!
NOW'S A GOOD TIME TO TEACH YOU ONE OF THE BASIC LAWS OF PHYSICS...
© 1998 by Daniel Shelton Distributed by NAAM
SIGH
"WHAT COMES DOWN MUST GO UP"...
PANT PANT

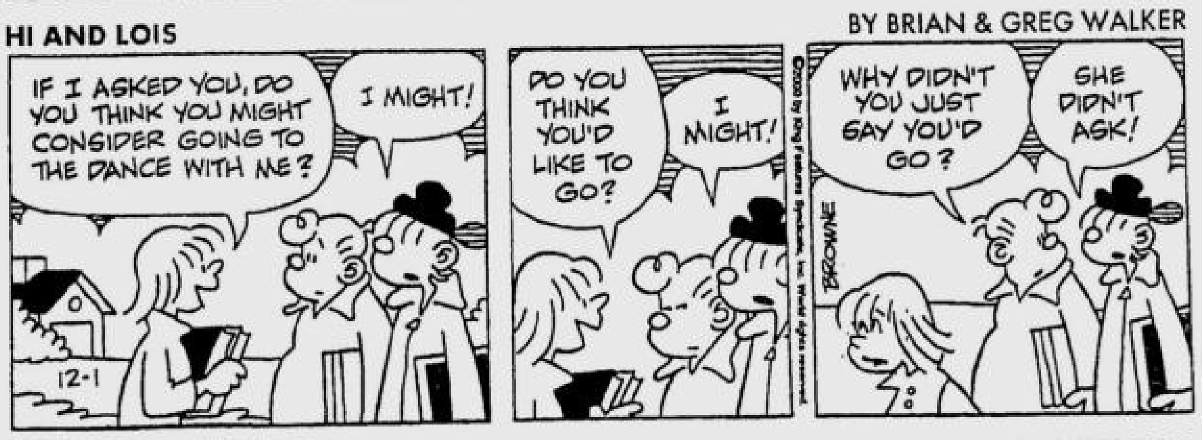
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AAA-AIIE
HELP!
CATCH THEM BEFORE THEY LAND!!!
LOOK AT THE TWO OF THEM—LEAPING FOR JOY AT THE FIRST SNOW!
12-8

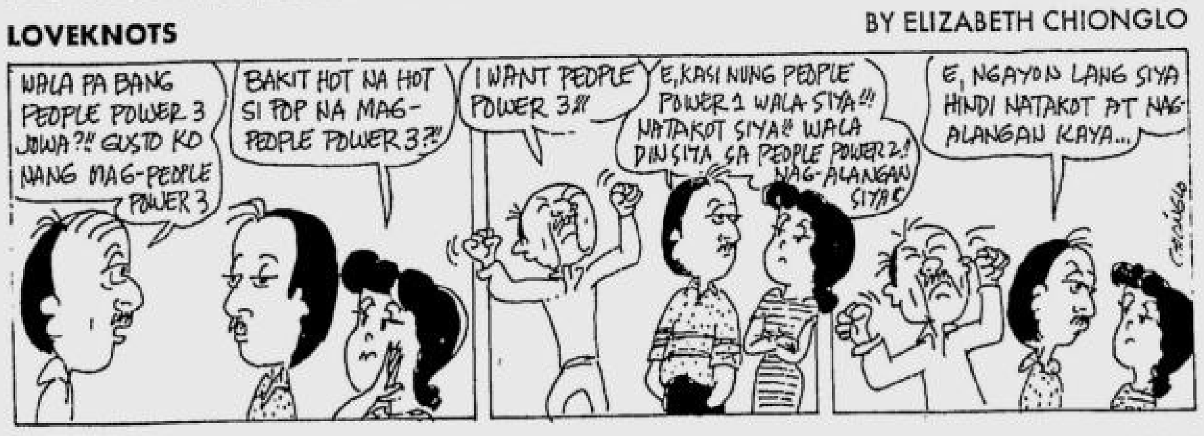
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


IF I ASKED YOU, DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT CONSIDER GOING TO THE DANCE WITH ME?
I MIGHT!
12-1
DO YOU THINK YOU'D LIKE TO GO?
I MIGHT!
BROWNE
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY YOU'D GO?
SHE DIDN'T ASK!

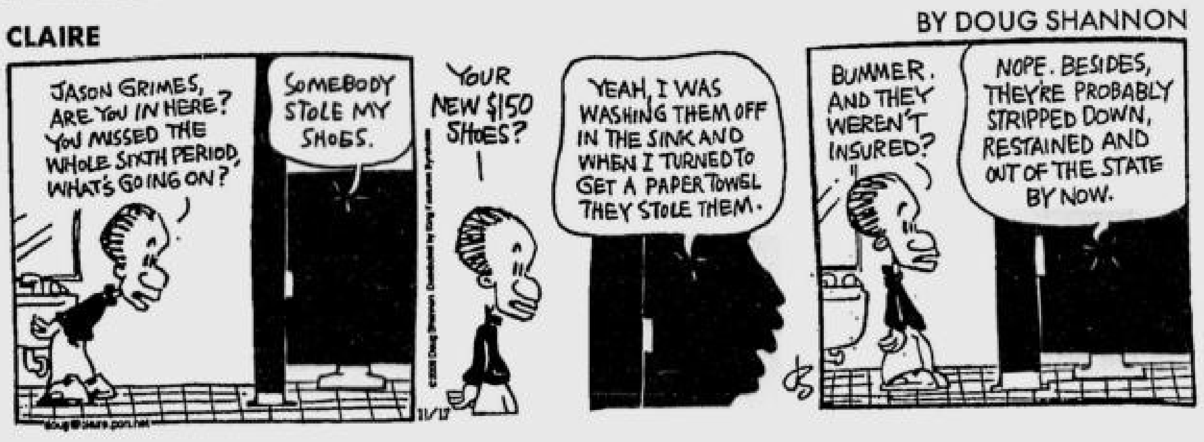
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


WALA PA BANG PEOPLE POWER 3 JOWA?!! GUSTO KO NANG MAG-PEOPLE POWER 3
BAKIT HOT NA HOT SI POP NA MAG-PEOPLE POWER 3?!
I WANT PEOPLE POWER 3!!!
E, KASI NUNG PEOPLE POWER 1 WALA SIYA!!! NATAKOT SIYA!! WALA DIN SIYA SA PEOPLE POWER 2! NAG-ALANGAN SIYA!
E, NGAYON LANG SIYA HINDI NATAKOT AT NAG-ALANGAN KAYA...
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


JASON GRIMES, ARE YOU IN HERE? YOU MISSED THE WHOLE SIXTH PERIOD, WHAT'S GOING ON?
SOMEBODY STOLE MY SHOES.
YOUR NEW $150 SHOES?
11/17
YEAH, I WAS WASHING THEM OFF IN THE SINK AND WHEN I TURNED TO GET A PAPER TOWEL THEY STOLE THEM.
BUMMER. AND THEY WEREN'T INSURED?
NOPE. BESIDES, THEY'RE PROBABLY STRIPPED DOWN, RESTAINED AND OUT OF THE STATE BY NOW.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

CFIP officers at a press conference held at the Westin Philippine Plaza recently, from left: Nicolaas K. de Lange, former CFIP chair; Eduardo G. Zuluaga, PIFS 2001 chair; Jose Leo P. Caparas, incoming CFIP national president; Charles M. Streegan, Cebu Furniture Industries Foundation Inc. president, and Lita Quisumbing, PIFS 2001 Cebu chair

CFIP showcases Filipino ingenuity in furniture show

THE CHAMBER of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP) is showcasing the art and craftsmanship of Filipino furniture makers in two consecutive shows this February. With theme "Contrast & Contradictions," organizers of the Philippine International Furniture Show 2001 (PIFS) say the show will be as unique as the displays.

It will be a two-in-one affair which opens on Feb. 24-27 at the World Trade Center, Manila, then moves to the Cebu International Convention Center, Cebu, from Feb. 27-March 2. The show will be the first of similar events in Asia.

Explaining the aims of PIFS 2001 at a press conference recently, Chamber leaders said the annual trade show, now on its fourth year, is the venue to bring to world attention the quality, artistry and innovativeness of Filipino furniture makers and designers. More than the generation of sales, its value is in arousing continued interest in this Philippine product.

Philippine furniture, according to Eduardo G. Zuluaga, PIFS 2001 chair, is one of the country's major exports. The most favored raw materials include wood, bamboo, stone, and now, not only whole furniture pieces but parts of tables, chairs, etc. are being exported as well. This is an effective means of retaining its share of the market—the Philippines continues to be the top exporter of furniture in Asia—where other countries have began to gain foothold.

While sales for January-September 2000 came up to $286.3 million (a 12.89 percent increase from the same period in 1999), the target for 2004 is $1 billion. CFIP national president Jose Leo P. Caparas is confident this goal can be met with a little help from the government.

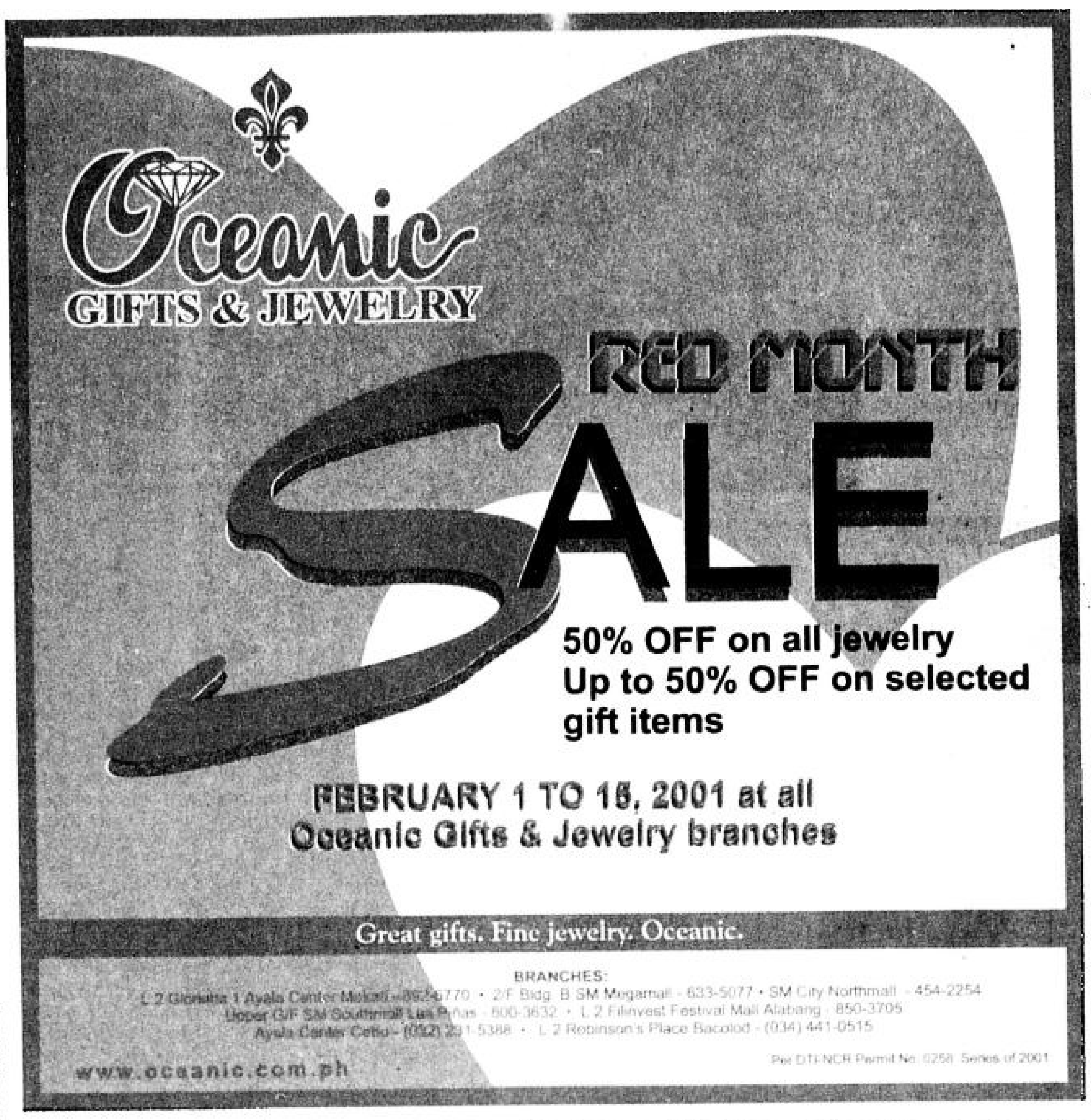
Aside from conventional areas where government assistance is necessary, the CFIP works quite independently. One instance of CFIP-government cooperation is the Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Chamber and the DENR for mutual support in the efficient management of natural resources. But no matter how the country's economy stands, members manage to stay afloat. Zuluaga calls the industry the "Steady Eddy" among exporters for this ability. He attributes this stability to the concern of management for its employees who total 60,000 direct and 350,000 indirectly.

The choice of "Contrast & Contradictions" as this year's theme is said to have been inspired by the principles of yin and yang that teach man how to harmonize opposites. This is reflected in the combined use of contrasting materials like soft, pliable cane and hard, solid stone. It is this "daring" style that sets the Filipino furniture makers apart.

This is also why, says Zuluaga, buyers are always mesmerized and filled with amazement at Filipino-crafted furniture. The show will focus once again on fresh and ingenious pieces made creatively from natural materials.

The Manila show at the World Trade Center will be open from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. It will be open to the public on the last day.

Doris G. Nuyda



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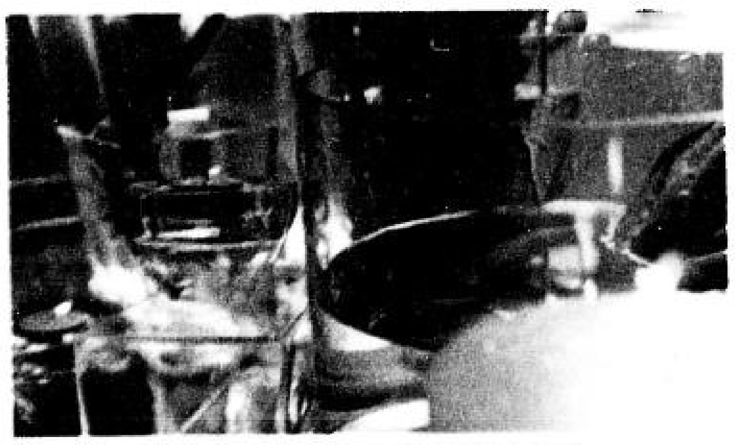

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Furniture warehouse-showroom opens Feb. 8

THE ART of living is best exemplified among many Filipino homes. Most of these homes adopt themes and variations that are closely associated with the owner's personal lifestyle or inclination, a specific range of interior details ranging from the traditional, modern or postmodern. In fact, a lot of these homes have been featured in the lifestyle sections of top newspapers, magazines and coffee-table books published here and abroad.

This is also why the Filipino taste regarding the "art of living" has also been upgraded because of the right exposure to the world of interiors. Because of this phenomenon, the country's pool of professional architects, space planners and builders, interior designers and interior decorators are indeed lucky because of the proliferation of "furniture and interior lifestyle shops" found in Makati, Ortigas Center, Quezon Avenue and Manila. Each of these shops offer their own brand of interior requirements ranging from the antique to the modern. And to most homeowners, our country has become a center for product sourcing since some of our products command high export revenues. But on the other hand, there are other interior details needed in furnishing one's home that are imported to suit one's requirements.

To these needs, come Feb. 8, Orientique Enterprises will formally open its warehouse-showroom located at No. 7 Pine St., near corner Sheridan St., Mandaluyong City.

Orientique Enterprises offers a one-stop quality shop of Asian furniture, antiques, carpets and novelty gift items from India, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Indonesia, Persia, Afghanistan and China.

Some of the items include tigerwood bedroom cabinets, drawer tables and antique beds and handmade tapestry, huge doors, chests, mirror frames, open cabinets, set of dining table.

,Other interior details include brass and silver jars, vases, jewelry cases, Buddha statuettes, elephant figurines and other animals in bronze cast.

Orentique Enterprises also offers interior consultation upon request. The showroom is open from Mondays through Sundays, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Call 746-6839 or 746-6850.

A BEAUTIFUL Java cabinets with a Bali console table and a super fine Persian carpet

On Time, All The Time
(A more reliable way of solving constipation)

Home treatment usually plays the most important long-term role in preventing constipation.

The first step in treating constipation is to understand that normal frequency varies widely, from three bowel movements a day to three a week. People who are constipated may find it difficult and painful to maintain regular bowel movement. Symptoms include small, hard stools every three or four days; dry stools (even if they're passed everyday) that are painful or difficult to eliminate and abdominal pain relieved by a bowel movement. Other symptoms may include feeling bloated, uncomfortable and sluggish.

Home treatment usually plays the most important long-term role in preventing constipation. Here are some helpful tips to consider:
- Dietary and lifestyle improvements can lessen the chances of constipation. A well-balanced diet that includes fiber-rich foods, such as unprocessed bran, whole-grain breads and fresh fruits and vegetables, is recommended.
- Drinking plenty of fluids and exercising regularly will help stimulate intestinal activity. Special exercises may be necessary to tone up abdominal muscles.
- Bowel habits are very important. Sufficient time should be set aside to allow for undisturbed visits to the bathroom. In addition, the urge to have a bowel movement should never be ignored.
- If an underlying disorder is causing constipation, treatment should be directed toward the specific cause. For example, if an underactive thyroid is causing constipation, the doctor may prescribe thyroid hormone replacement therapy.

Knowing this, many of those suffering from constipation rely on natural remedies like taking more fluids and eating fruits like papaya or prunes. While these prove to be effective preventive measures, these remedies may take time to solve constipation once it has set in.

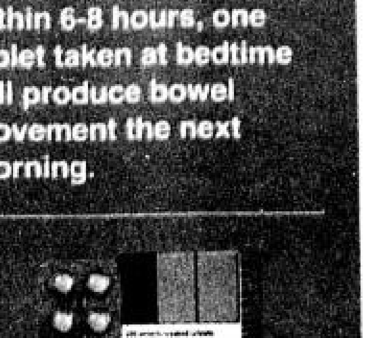
Laxatives, on the other hand are medications that facilitate the passage and elimination of feces from the colon and rectum helping your bowel movements get back on track. Common laxatives may be classified according to their mechanism of action:
a.) **Bulk-forming/Fiber laxatives.** These retain fluid with the laxative, increasing bulk and stimulating propulsion. They increase the volume of feces, making them softer and easier to pass. Bulk-forming laxatives usually need some time before they can work because they need to adapt to the normal excretion cycle of the body.
b.) **Contact laxatives.** These laxatives stimulate the intestinal wall to contract and thus speed up the elimination of feces. Because the feces spend less time in the intestine, less water is reabsorbed into the blood vessels which helps keep the feces soft. Softer feces means easier passing—less pain, more comfort.

Taking contact laxatives such as Dulcolax is a reliable way of relieving constipation. It acts directly on the colon (large intestine) to promote its natural movement thus making it easier to expel stool.

Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours. One tablet taken at bedtime will produce bowel movement the next morning, allowing you to enjoy your day instead of suffering from that bloated, sluggish feeling you get from being constipated.

Remember, the best way to establish a regular bowel movement cycle is simply to follow a healthy lifestyle and an overall sense of well-being. You can then go on enjoying a more productive lifestyle. On time, all the time---without the wait.

Taking contact laxatives such as Dulcolax is a reliable way of relieving constipation.
It acts directly on the colon (large intestine) to promote its natural movement thus making it easier to expel stool.
Because Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours, one tablet taken at bedtime will produce bowel movement the next morning.



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____
TEL. #: ____________ AGE: ________

Designing home, garden and business through feng shui

THIS living room design blends traditional elements with the modern. The mirror above the fireplace balances the opening below, drawing the residents' *ch'i* upward, and plants and flowers flanking the fireplace enhance the energy. Gentle curves are positive attributes.

Feng Shui Design
By Sarah Rossbach and Master Lin Yun
192 pages

REVIEW

A TREE behind a house—not too close—creates stability and luck...If bamboo trees surround the house, the family will have sufficient livelihood...Outdoors and indoors, plants and flowers give good hopes to inhabitants... Healthy plants and flowers inside or flocking the entrance of business establishments will attract clients, business and good *ch'i*."

These are some of the interesting ideas readers will find in the book "Feng Shui Design," which publishers claim as the "first complete illustrated guide to the art of design with feng shui."

Feng shui is deeply rooted in Taoism, a religious belief that acknowledges the power of nature forces to affect people's health, happiness, fortune and future. Experts profess that people can change their life by changing their surroundings.

Themes

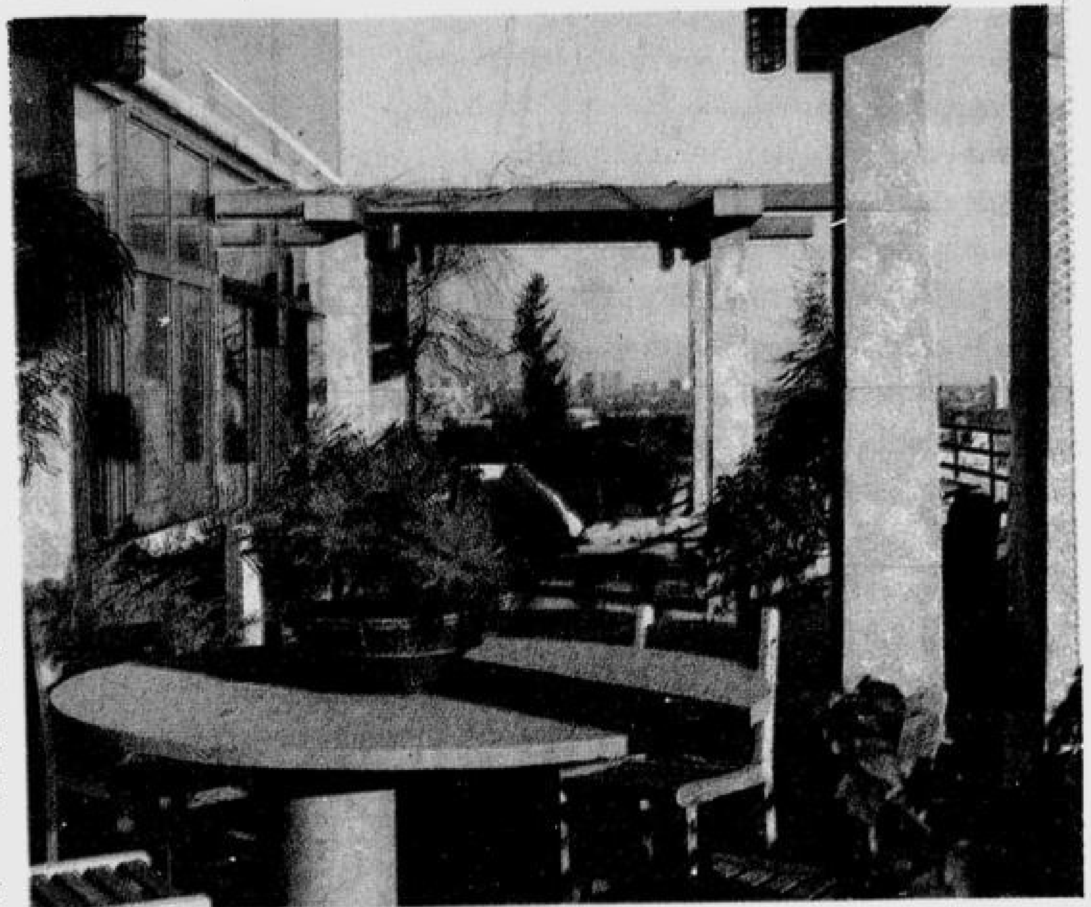
The book is all about feng shui designing for today's home, garden and business. There are nine chapters covering history and modern feng shui supplemented by fully illustrated pictures of classic and modern feng shui, original calligraphy, plans, diagnosis and solutions.

The coauthors are distinguished authorities on the subject. As introduced in the jacket of the book, journalist Sarah Rossbach and Buddhist philosopher Master Lin Yun are "the original pioneers of interpreting authentic feng shui for Western audiences."

Rossbach has written several books and articles, four of which she coauthored with Master Lin. "The bible of feng shui" was how The New York Times described her work. Master Lin is known to have pioneered feng shui knowledge in the West and is consulted by big name politicians and business leaders. He also founded a Buddhist temple in California and a monastery in New York.

Expectedly, when a journalist and a Buddhist scholar collaborate on the writing of a book about feng shui, readers can look forward to an interesting piece of work that is authoritative yet simple enough to understand. The authors have indeed demystified the complexity of feng shui's arcane terms, charts and complicated principles.

"Three major interrelated themes run through feng shui," they explained. The first is that humans are affected by their surroundings. The second is that feng shui is a language of symbols. It interprets how the color of a leaf, the shape of a hill or a house, the position of a bed or desk, the direction of a road or river, decoration on a building or home become messages that influence and shape our lives. The third is that feng shui is a form of literal metaphysics that emerged from Chinese philosophy, religion, folk cures and early science.



STRATEGICALLY placed plants can improve the general feng shui of an urban home with a terrace, and harmonize an imbalanced apartment shape.

GRACEFUL CURVES in the walls and stairsways of Felissimo, New York's environmentally conscious department store, are features of the original Beaux Arts building. But in feng shui terms, they evoke a sense of hope and development and echo the forms of nature.

Celebrity users

Garden lovers will no doubt learn a lot from the chapter on the art of landscaping, feng shui style. Among the wide range of subjects tackled in the chapter, the generous guidelines to correct bad luck garden features are most interesting. For example, they recommend the correct positioning of trees and plants, ponds, pools, driveways, paths, gazebos, etc,

In the last 20 years, interest in the art has burgeoned, Rossbach noted. "Feng shui has become more than a mere curiosity, it is becoming woven into the very fabric of Western life." Her list of famous feng shui users included Prince Charles, Madonna, Donald Trump, Rita Wilson (Tom Hank's wife), Eartha Kitt, Michael Crichton, the Duchess of York, Sir Richard Greenway of Marks & Spencer.

"The book was written with the intention of assisting readers to achieve a broader and deeper understanding of the study of feng shui," explained Master Lin. But it is no New Age quick fix, Rossbach pointed out.

To become successful feng shui practitioners, here are tips from Master Lin: Have a loving heart and willingness to help others; have an understanding of how to practice and utilize the physical and more transcendental solutions of feng shui; understand classical, modern Eastern and Western feng shui and respect other religions and feng shui schools; and enhance personal and spiritual growth.

Tita V. Giron

Available at National Bookstore.

E-mail the author at mgiron@csi.com.ph

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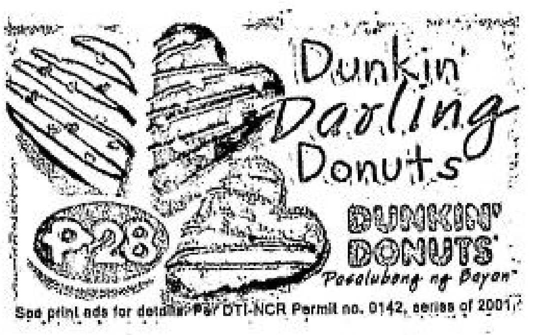
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The Miriam whom we love to love

By persistence and hard work, beauty queen Miriam Quiambao is making inroads in broadcast journalism

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BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ
PHOTOS BY WAHOO GUERRERO

AT THE HEIGHT of People Power 2, Westin Philippine Plaza was a world unto its own. The lagoon was tranquil. It was totally oblivious to the mounting tension as legions of patriotic Filipinos trooped to Edsa and Mendiola, and the news of resignations from the Cabinet and defections from the military spread.

It was the setting for INQUIRER's pictorial for Viseversa's summer collection, with beauty queen-turned-broadcaster Miriam Quiambao as the model. While makeup artist Peter Urbi was applying color on her hooded eyelids in the comforts of a hotel room, Miriam wished she was in Edsa.

As talent for "Extra! Extra!" and "Unang Hirit," the greenhorn Miriam has been learning TV work through the school of hard knocks. Previously it was she who was waited on and hounded by the press. Now she's on the other side of the fence. That Friday morning, she had an interview scheduled in Malacañang with then Press Undersecretary Mike Toledo at 9 a.m. Because of the pressures in the Palace, she only got to talk to him at noon. She waited three hours.

During the impeachment trials, Miriam had to elbow her way through the wolf pack of press people to get some sound bites from the senators. During her reign as Bb. Pilipinas and her near victory in the Miss Universe in 1999, Miriam was often sought after by the press. "Now I have to humble myself. *Nakipagsiksikan ako* with the other reporters to try to get interviews. That's a challenge for me," she said.

Miriam has been doing TV hosting jobs for a year and started broadcast journalism during the impeachment trials. In "Unang Hirit" she reported on lifestyle stories.

"In my first few jobs, I read scripts in the teleprompter and memorized lines. My segment producer would present them to me. After a while, it got boring. I felt there was something more to this job than just reading. After doing 'Unang Hirit,' I wanted to get deeper into the stories. I asked my producer to help me formulate the interview questions. Later I gave the suggestions regarding the conceptualization and finding a story angle," she said.

Doing her homework

Eventually, she found herself writing and even spending the night editing a video.

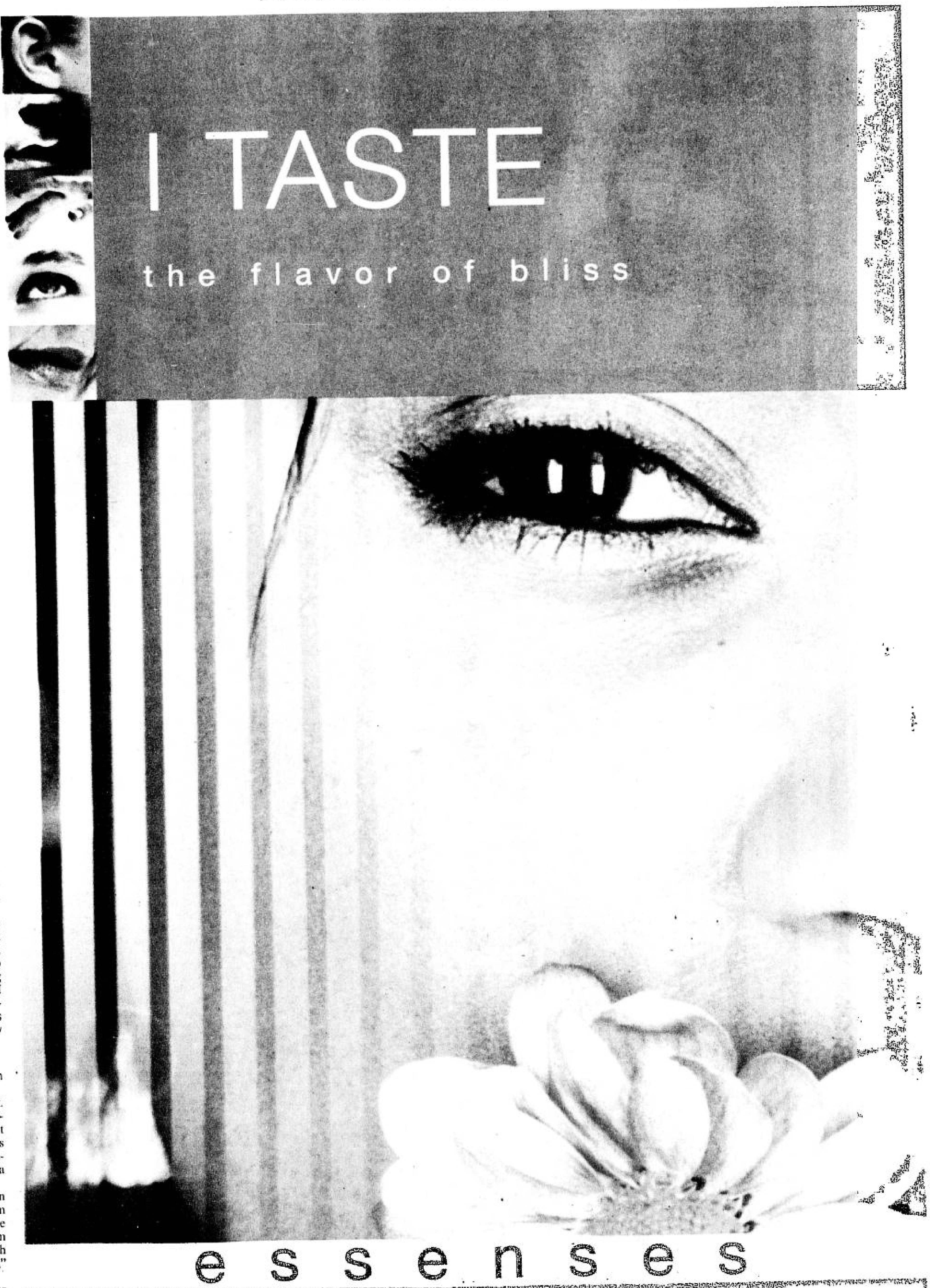
Let's face it. In broadcasting, looks count. Miriam's popularity as a beauty queen and product endorser helped her land the job. However, it doesn't end there. To develop credibility, she has to do her homework such as reading several newspapers every day, learning legalese and reading a broadcast voice handbook.

Critics have noted that her voice is too thin and high-pitched to sound authoritative. Miriam accepts her limitations. Her mission is to rise above them. "In my everyday conversation, I'm trying to make my voice stronger and my pitch lower, such that I can effectively deliver my lines," she said.

She was candid about some of her insecurities about her communication skills. Miriam remembered the trauma of having a mental block in the middle of an essay writing class. "I was disheartened. I cried. I have this phobia in speech and writing. I try to write and speak when given the chance."

When Miriam won Bb. Pilipinas-World title (she later became the country's representative in the Miss Universe contest when the original winner was disqualified), she sought out to be a woman of substance by being vocal about her

THE MIRIAM/ p.D6


I TASTE
the flavor of bliss
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Rustan's
MAKATI

Old vines in new skin-care bottles

MABOLO Floral Shop and Cibo created the dining ambience at the press launch of Vinéfit.

THE ROSE, Lancôme's icon, and the grapes used in Vinéfit inspired the table setting.

RESTAURATEUR Malu Gamboa tests the products at the new Lancôme counter in Rustan's Makati.

WHAT we eat end up in our skins. Oranges prevent wrinkles. Green tea helps in skin renewal and the grapes used in Chardonnay act as pollution busters.

That's the claim of L'Oreal's high-end cosmetics line Lancôme, which launched a skin-care formula at Rustan's last week.

To keep the skin in top shape, it's not enough that you wear a sunblock to ward off harmful rays and a moisturizer to prevent dryness. Moisturizers in the new millennium have a tougher job. They shield you from hidden assailants and give you energy for the growth of new skin cells.

What's the rational? The outer skin protects you from external aggression such as pollutants, smoking, sun's rays and changes in temperature. The middle layer of the skin consists of support systems. When these support fibers are tightly bundled, the skin is firm.

When the skin is exposed to ultraviolet rays, it reacts by inciting molecules called free radicals. They attack the skin at different levels by impairing the genetic formation and by ruining the structure of lipid membranes in cells. They also ruin the skin's protective layer and weaken the fibers that hold up the skin. Because the skin has to work overtime, it uses up its reserves of moisture and nutrients. The skin barrier can no longer perform its protective role. The epidermis is powerless against these free radicals. The skin becomes tired and loses its firmness.

> Lancôme has launched Vinéfit, an energizing and hydrating complex that uses grape extract to renew and shield the skin

Studies have shown that grapes are beneficial. Rich in sugar, they invigorate. The grape seeds contain tannins and oils rich in polyunsaturated acids that have hydrating and softening properties. They contain B vitamins that are important to the metabolism of sugars, minerals and trace elements so that the skin can function properly. The solid parts contain flavonoids that trap free radicals. Aside from pumping up the resistance of blood vessels to prevent heart disease, these elements also prevent signs of aging caused by sunlight.

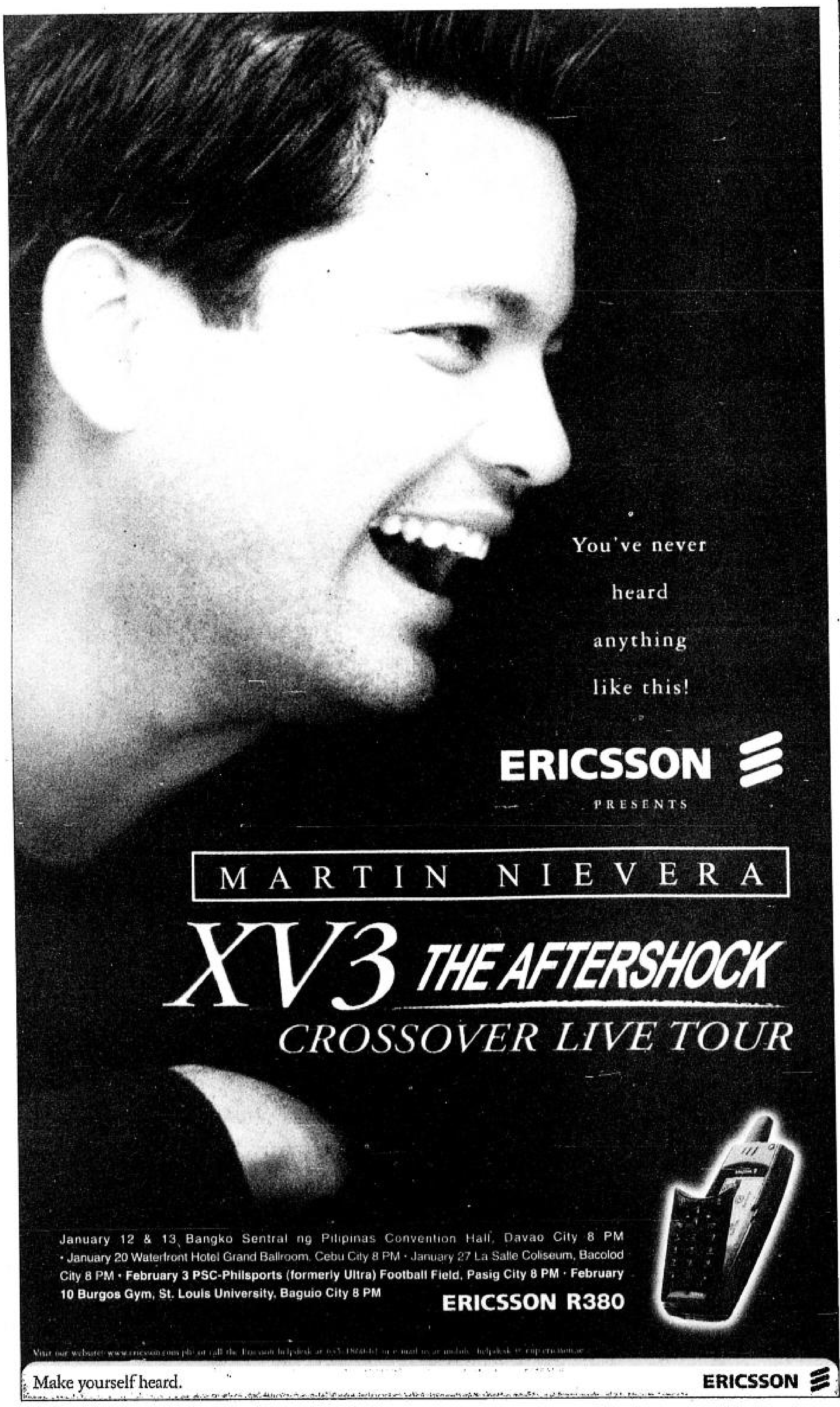
Grapes also contain polyphenols, catchers of free radicals. Some antioxidants act only in certain stages of the free radical reactions. Polyphenols act more extensively wherever free radicals are formed. While Vitamin E prevents the collapse of skin cell membranes, polyphenols provide overall protection.

Using grape extract, Lancôme Laboratories has launched Vinéfit, an energizing, hydrating and protective complex. This skin-care cream targets women from 25-35 years of age. The technology of Vinéfit is derived from work in choosing grape extracts that are stable, unlike Vitamin C which loses its strength when it is exposed to air. Scientists favored white grapes over the red because the latter affected the color in the formula. Anti-ultraviolet ray filters were infused to make the formula light. The sugar compounds are gentle, leaving the skin fresh.

Vinéfit contains polyols, water captors that prevent dryness. It also has magnesium and vitamins to help skin renewal. This skin-care cream is targeted at women who want to keep their skin in good condition.

Women after 35 will probably need treatment creams.

ANA Perez de Tagle of Lancôme, L'Oreal Philippines' boss Paul-Henri Duillet, Ambassador Bienvenido Tantoco, chair of Rustan's Group of Companies, and Rico Tantoco, president of Rustan's Commercial Corporation, celebrate the return of Lancôme to the department store after more than a decade.


You've never heard anything like this!

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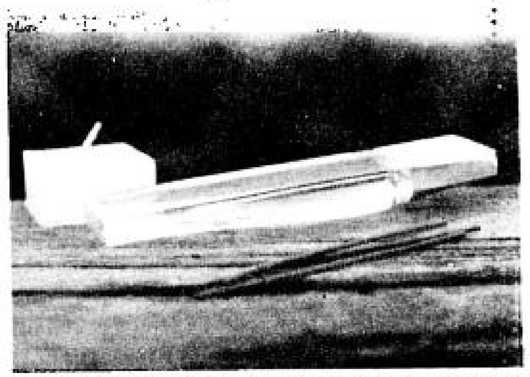
The Truth shall set you free

Calvin Klein's newest scent goes right at the heart of things


CANDLE perfume and incense sticks for calming down

THIS is a time of volatile changes: the breeding ground for uncertainty, insecurity and anxiety. While some think that stress is needed to achieve peak performance, the greater reality is that stress results in burnout and disease.

The triggers of stress have evolved over time. Surveys have shown that despite the sophisticated and high-tech working conditions, people are spending more time at work and are challenged by the constant adjustment between their professional and personal lives. Today's world demands more from people. They are expected to act immediately, accomplish a lot in less time and be best in everything they do. In the name of civilized progress, people have brought upon themselves a modern condition called stress.

In response to the times, companies are developing fragrances and other coping mechanisms for stress. This is based on the premise that certain scents affect our emotions and even facilitate relaxation.

Unilever Cosmetics International has just launched the latest Calvin Klein fragrance called Truth. The approach is so New Age. "It's about taking the time to slow down, and experience the sensuality in everyday life. That's the essence of truth; it's about following your instinct, being true to yourself, your sensuality—and that's sexy."

Truth Calvin Klein follows the nonconventional formula based on two unique harmonies—lush and sensual. They contain notes that are exclusive to Calvin Klein—bamboo that adds vibrancy, bio-vanilla (a lighter vanilla that evokes warmth) and the precious plant elixir called sapling. The fragrance doesn't change even after three hours. It's a light and feminine scent. The eau de parfum comes with a Lucite case that can be used as a home décor item.

Quite interesting are the ancillary lines designed to promote relaxation. They are made for rituals that can't be rushed.

The body lotion and shower gel not only cleanse and smoothen the skin but also provide nourishment. The body oil spray is dry oil that gives the skin shimmer.

The oil essences are oils individually packed so you can create your customized fragrance. Just dab on the pulse and layer it with other oils for your individual scent. Or, if you're feeling down, get a whiff of citrus to perk you up. For the evening, apply bio-vanilla or lilac for a velvety sensuality.

The bath grains are blush-colored crystals to soothe tired souls. It contains minerals that remove the toxins in the skin that's exposed to pollution.

Truth is the first bedtime fragrance that's sensual and light because it contains no alcohol. So it's fresh and light. The votive trios are square, white pillar candles whose waxes don't flow out when they melt. They burn inward.

If you meditate, Truth Calvin Klein's incense sticks last for 45 minutes.

Indeed, relaxation can't be hurried. Hopefully, this fragrance and its rites will take women to a calming place.

Ricky Reyes unveils the look of 2001

WHO says that men's hairstyles are all the same? Not top hairdresser Ricky Reyes who consistently comes up with new styles for both men and women.

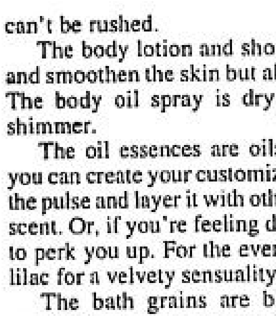
Far from being drab and repetitious, hairstyles for the male species of this cool generation can be versatile and dynamic, if given the correct treatment and an all-new exciting twist.

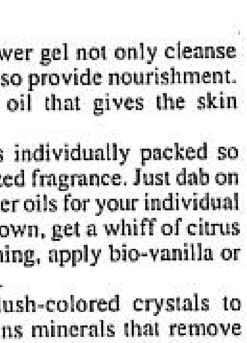
Ricky Reyes unveils the look for the 2001 man—carefree without being careless, adventurous, almost daring even, but cautious still. All these are reflected, Ricky says, in the way he sports his hair for this auspicious Year of the Snake.

"The look expresses a carefree attitude toward himself and his surroundings without being careless at all. The man of 2001 should also express his versatility and his ability to adapt to various conditions," Ricky explains the look.

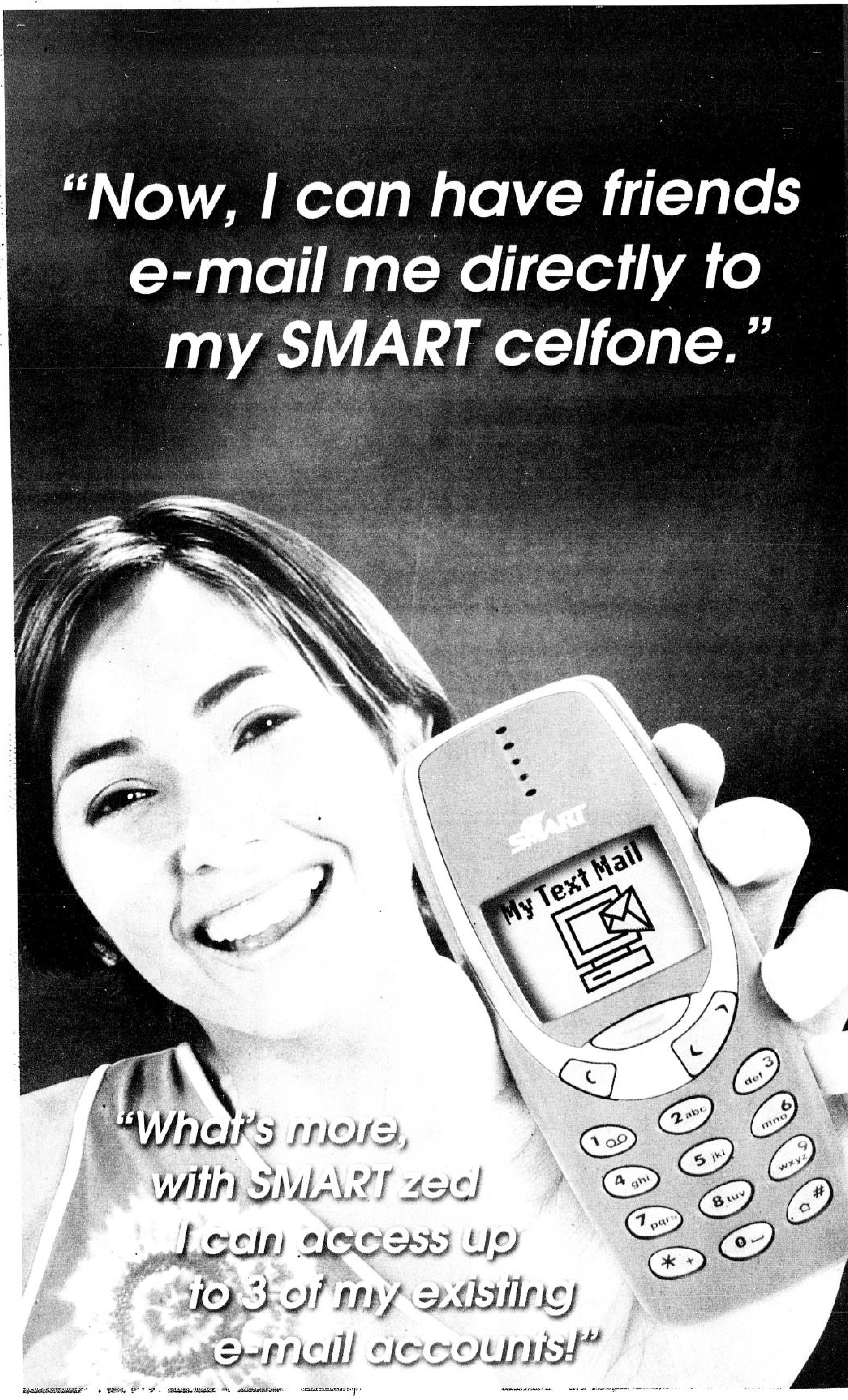
They're back. Long hair is back for men, Ricky says, not the one-length, limp variety of the erstwhile unwashed hippie, but that which bears the invitation to "C'mon, look at this guy 'coz he's cool."

Layers are carefully fashioned and flipped at the sleekly trimmed ends to give a youthful stance. Fringes and bangs complete the look.


LONG hair with a twist


FLIPPED on ends

Then, there's the updated Beatles look which puts emphasis on the bangs. Reminiscent of the manes Fab Four in their juvenile years, this cropped look is great even on yuppies who work hard in the day yet play hard at night. Little streaks of color (shun the hues on the crown area), plus a generous application of gel or mousse will give this hairstyle that all-new, contemporary appeal.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Donning the don dandily

By Camille T. Cruz
Photos by Ernie U. Sarmiento

I WONDER why men do not groom themselves fully. It may be that some are still trying to find their style so that they experiment with different types of garments and silhouettes, which sometimes make them look funny. Of course, a small number chooses to dress the classic way—clean, fresh and stylish. Something like the GQ look.

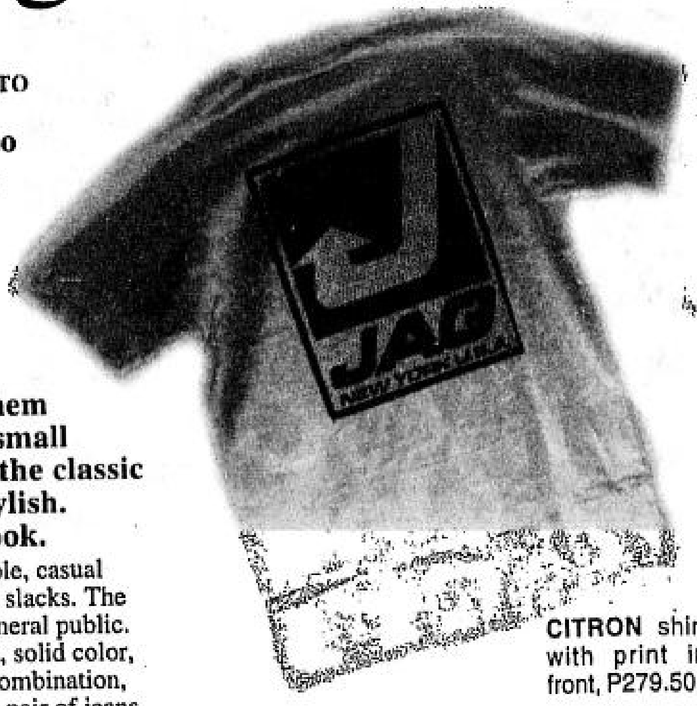
The classic look includes simple, casual fashion like the shirt and jeans or slacks. The look is within the reach of the general public.

For T-shirts, instead of a plain, solid color, the wearer may try a two-toned combination, like a baseball shirt. Worn with a pair of jeans or slacks, it works well. Perhaps a pair of colored denims would work, too.

Simple though not too plain T-shirts can also look attractive. A long-sleeved T-shirt with a stripe along the sleeves is a good example. Usually, jean stores have simple casual shirts to go with jeans. Short-sleeved shirts to be worn tucked-out are also part of the casual family.

When you cannot figure out what to wear on top, make variations. Be classic but sporty. You can do no wrong if you start caring about your appearance.

Combine the classic with the casual and you have the sporty look


CITRON shirt with print in front, P279.50

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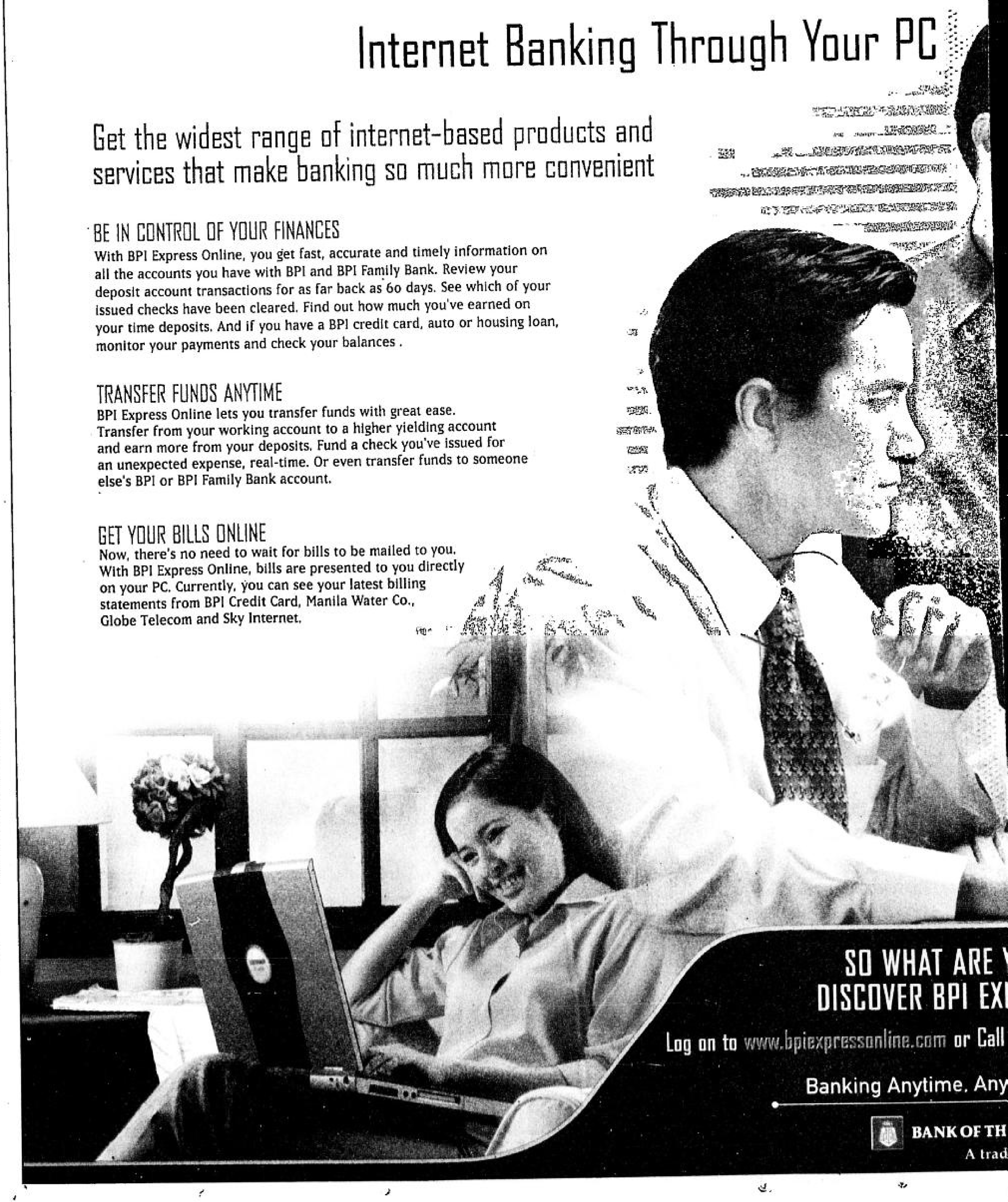
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Soul-surfing

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez

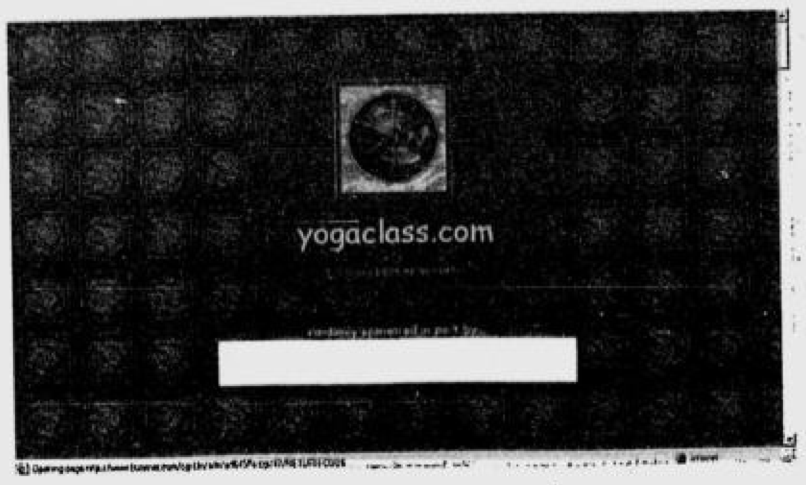
Inspirational websites are multiplying on the Internet, new signs of renewed spirituality

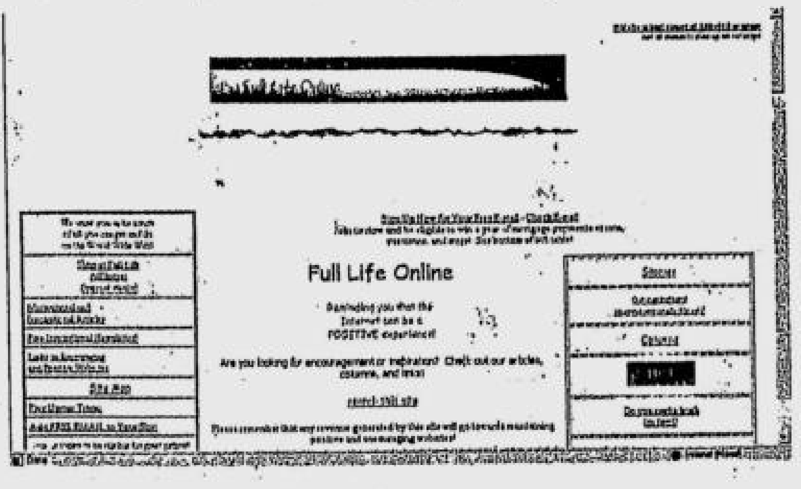
THE PHENOMENAL success of books like "Chicken Soup for the Soul" and the popularity of mind-body activities like yoga seem to signal a desire to be in touch with one's self. By stark contrast, this is happening at a time when technology is moving forward faster than ever.

Strangely enough, technology is being used to perpetuate the new inwardness. For instance, people love sending inspirational text messages and e-mail. Like the much-dreaded chains with good-luck totems, birds, chickens, angels and other similar strange creatures, they are passed on relentlessly. Most of the time I have to admit I delete them without so much as a glance. However, there are a few that do inspire and give even cynics like myself something to ponder on.

The Internet, which has changed the world irrevocably, houses an unbelievable number of "Inspirational Sites." It seems weird, but when you think about it, it makes sense. What better place to find the meaning of life than the World Wide Web? Stressed out at the office? Log on to yogaclass.com and do some breathing exercises to unwind. Just make sure there's no one around to hear the sitar music and soothing voice that guide you. Feeling depressed? Log on to one of hundreds of sites and you will surely find a story or quote that will make you feel better.

Silly as it sounds, the proliferation of these sites means many people do find solace in them. Here are a few worth looking into. If none of them gives you what you're looking for, there are links to other sites. Of course, they can be quite cheesy, but some people like cheese and if it makes them better people, then so be it.


yogaclass.com


Full Life Online

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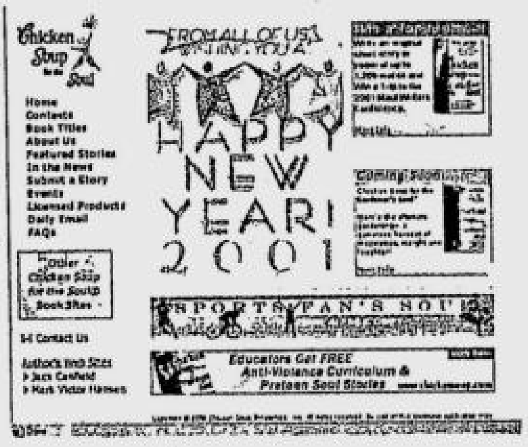
Afterhours Inspirational Stories

Action canceled



Chickensoup.com

The mother of all inspirational sites, this features selected stories from every "Chicken Soup" book there is. It is basically more of what everyone can't seem to get enough of with a few interactive activities. For instance, you can send in your own stories as well as enter your e-mail address so the stories of the day or week can be delivered straight to your mailbox.

Inspirationalstories.com

This site has a good number of links. Aside from the usual stories that you can read or download, it has a section where the stories are specific for different beliefs like Christianity, Buddhism and Zen, Judaism and Taoism. Reading through most of them shows that even if religions may not all agree with one another, spirituality is universal.

Motivational-quotes.com

Like what its name says, this has nothing but quotes and proverbs. You can choose from a whole range of quotes by famous people on life, friendship, love, self-image, success, etc. They also offer a motivational quote of the day that they can send to your e-mail every day.

Beliefnet.com

"We all believe in something" is the tagline on this Website. Beliefnet centers more on spirituality and different religions. Basically more of the same, though, the usual stories and poems.

Fulllifeonline.com

"Reminding you that the Internet can be a positive experience" is what they say. This site has a good selection of stories and quotes. (Hey, it quotes Albert Camus who wrote "Exile and the Kingdom"). It formats stories/quotes/poems into "journeys." It has four journeys, each composed of 15-20 pages. You are not expected to read them all in one sitting, of course. Among their varied selection is the famous Sunscreen address of Mary Schmidt that Kurt Vonnegut was mistakenly given credit for. I decided to reread it and was caught by surprise when sentimental muzak, that sounded like it was coming from a Clavinova, started streaming out from my speakers. Background music makes the whole scenario too comical but the good news is you can turn it off. It also has an ezine called livinglifefully.com.

Dailyzen.com

Get free Zen cards and a daily Zen journal in your e-mail if you register in this site. However, this is not for the faint-hearted. The readings are deep—Zen-master deep. The quotes are more manageable but still a huge step from the feel-good quotes we are all familiar with.

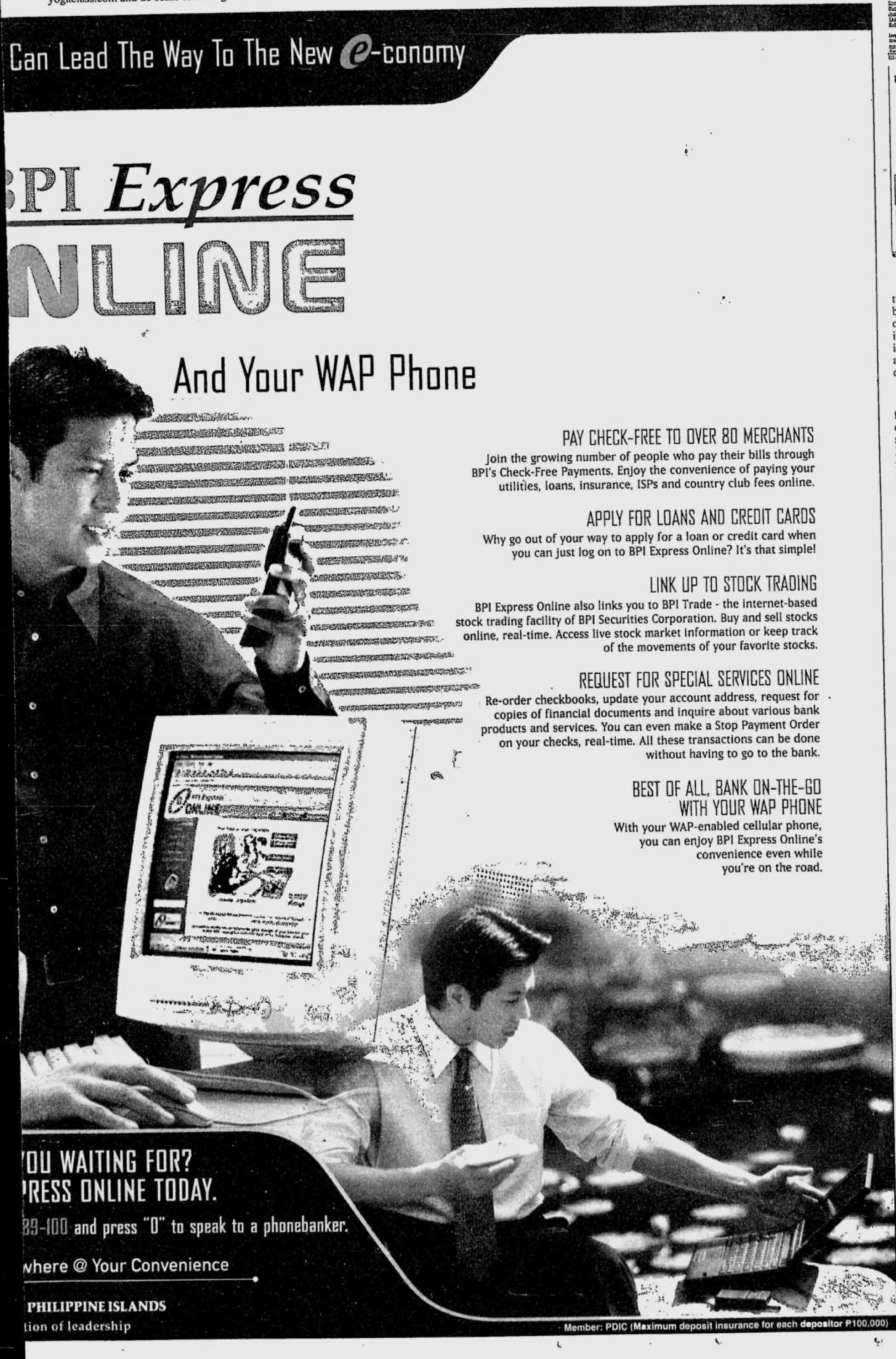
Yogaclass.com

This is a very basic yoga site and if you have real player (which you can download for free), you can take free yoga classes. It is divided in six sections—breathe, stretch, workout, interact, chant and relax. A voice will guide you and it is easy to follow. I haven't gotten past the stretching yet but it is a nice way to relax after sitting in front of the computer for hours. Better done in the privacy of your home though.

Yogabasics.com

This is a very comprehensive site and gives a good background and description on Hatha Yoga, including its history and philosophy. Some exercises are a bit advanced. There are free MP3s to download if you want to do your "lessons" while offline and a link to Yoga music radio, "broadcasting soft tranquil music 24 hours a day."

Obviously, there's something for everyone. These sites are just a few of many, many more. Find one that suits your needs and personality, and take some time to feed your mind and spirit. After all, you have no excuse, it is within your reach—literally. If you are too lazy to surf, subscribe to one of them. They send free quotes and stories to your e-mail anyway.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TEEING off at Westin's aqua golf driving range in a nectar midriff top, paisley ruffled skirt and denim jacket

IN A PENSIVE mood

The Miriam whom we love to love

(From page D1)

views. "A lot of my fans have inspired me in a way because of my being outspoken about my faith which keeps me going," she said. Miriam is active in a Catholic charismatic group.

She recalled how she paled in comparison to the veteran Johnny Litton when they cohosted Brian McKnight's concert. "At that time I lacked preparation for the event. I said to myself afterward that if I wanted to be better in hosting, I won't let this experience intimidate me," she said.

Persistence

When she is deadset on reaching a goal, she will achieve it regardless of obstacles. She has shown patience and persistence and has been unflappable in many circumstances.

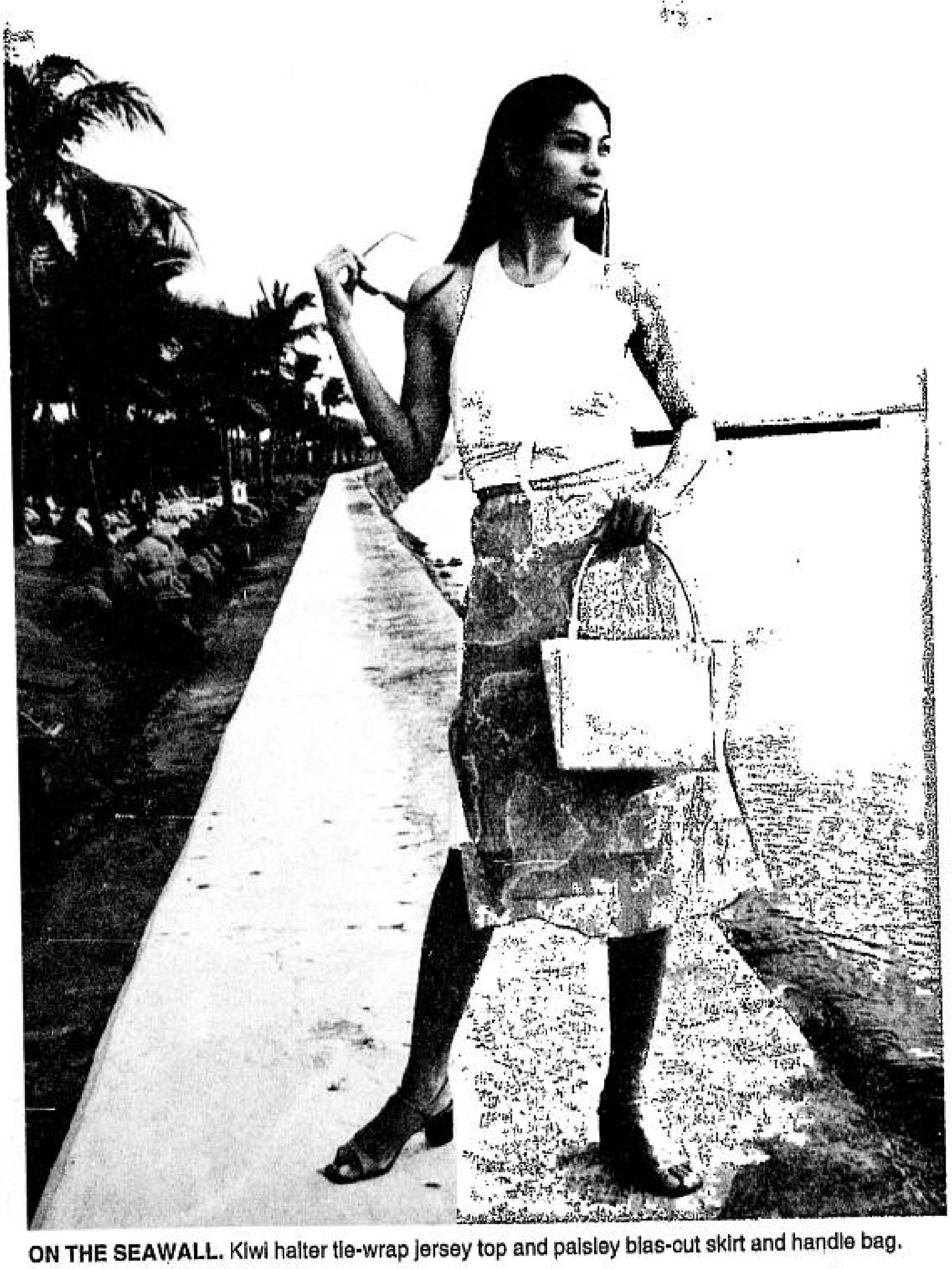
To become a confident host, she surrendered her stage fright and insecurities to God. "I asked for strength, courage and clarity of mind," she said. In a recent hosting job, she was satisfied with her improvement. "Although I've fallen many times (remember the time she tripped in the Miss Universe prepageant night?), I find that these trials are lessons. They encourage me to do better in what I do."

Miriam is determined to be a respected broadcaster and she's prepared for the long hard climb. She hopes to produce inspirational documentaries. One of her memorable assignments was doing a feature on an inmate in the New Bilibid Prisons who made candles under the tutelage of the Philippine Jesuit Prison Society. The man found the candle symbolic of God lighting up his life.

"Other people might say I'm just a former beauty queen, and this job requires a lot of intellectual discipline and ability. I just focus on my job. I try to do better in what I do. Mel Tiangco didn't become Mel Tiangco overnight. It took time before she was recognized. I'm looking forward to that day when people will take me seriously as a broadcaster. I'll take it one step at a time," she said.

MAKEUP BY PETER URBI
CLOTHES BY VISEVERSA AT SM MEGAMALL, RUSTAN'S MAKATI AND SHANGRI-LA
SUNGLASSES BY CALVIN KLEIN AND CK
LOCATION: WESTIN PHILIPPINE PLAZA
SPECIAL THANKS TO RICA PEÑALOSA, VIVIAN ZAPANTA AND EDMOND UMALI FOR THE USE OF THE DINGY.

SPECTATOR SPORT. Denim single-button jacket, striped tank, white twill skort (shorts under a skirt) with silver buttons and white slip-ons.



ON THE SEAWALL. Kiwi halter tie-wrap jersey top and paisley bias-cut skirt and handle bag.

BANGKO Sentral Pilipinas Gov. Paeng Buenaventura with Marivic Rufino

HENRI Muzzarelli with Becky Garcia

CAROLYN Masibay and Cookie Perez-Rubio

TOMMY Toledo with past president Tony Rufino

HELEN Ong and Mita Rufino

PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

JANINE and Dave de Padua, Marit Meland-Yuchengco

Grace and thrill at the Polo Club

PAOLA Zobel, Cita Revilla-Yabut, Maricris Zobel

THERE are three things that make a polo game special: the weather, the crowd and the food. All of this was plentiful when the game season opened at the Manila Polo Club. Everybody was in high spirits because it was the day after GMA was sworn into office. The weather was cool and breezy. Unlike in previous openings, the Past Presidents' Cup this year was well attended. In most polo games, you'll see the polo wives such as Ms Inigo Zobel, Ms Ricky Yabut and mothers like Carolyn Garcia cheering for son Anthony. Ed Roxas always comes in shorts and loafers, sans socks. There are expats dressed in summer suits and tea dresses. Last opening day, the food and wine were abundant. Indeed, watching the games is a refreshing way to spend Sundays.

The opening of the Past Presidents' Cup was a beautiful day—it came the day after Gloria was sworn in

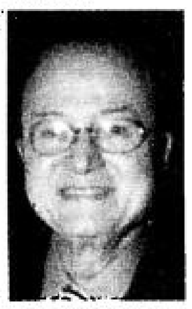
UMPIRE Jun Juban, Manila Polo Club president Tony Garcia and former president Eddie Yap

ANTHONY Filamor

AMBASSADOR Ralph Gonzales

HANS Kasten

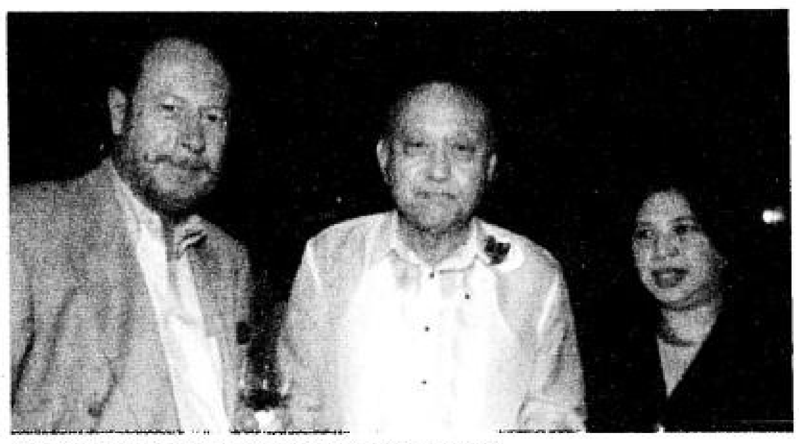
RENE Concepcion


VICENTE Ayllon

SANTI Elizalde

PAST president and current VP Charlie S. Rufino

MARILOU Prieto


ROGER Davis, Polly Ascalon, Denise Lacson

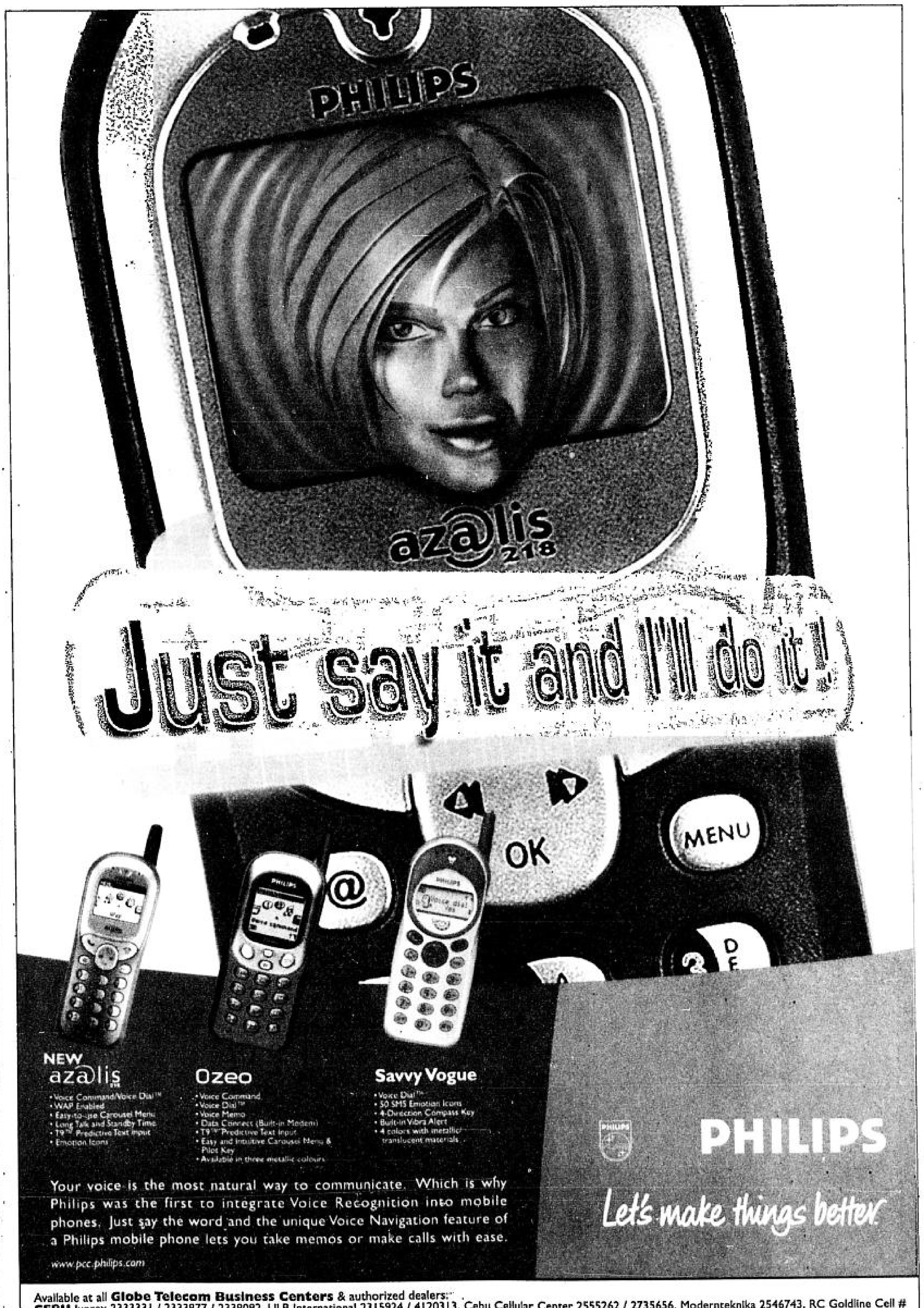
Top bars hold contest for partygoers

MANILA'S top bars rivaled in a friendly contest called "Chivas Night Out Trivia." "Chivas Night Out Trivia" was a challenge between the wolf bars like Conway's Giraffe, Stars and Venezia over a trivia game through live simulcast feed in a closed circuit format. The game show concept was given a twist by Chivas. Party people of one bar observed what's happening in another bar via a wide screen. For the first trivia that took place simultaneously at Giraffe and Conway's, guests of Giraffe could view what was happening in Conway's and vise versa.

Lady luck smiled kindly at Star Café and Dining as the team composed of Charlie Ysmael, Ginggay Joven, Leica Carpio, EJ Litton and Nick Ramos was proclaimed the champions in the first-ever "Chivas Night Out Trivia." Not to be outdone with their antics were the contestants from Giraffe composed of Larry Leviste, Leah Navarro and Morten Friis. The winning team brought home the much-coveted Chivas Regal bottles and certificates for windsailing classes at the Taal Lake Yacht Club.

As the liquid gold of Chivas Regal was pouring, wits were being tested by Trivia game hosts Pia Guanio and Francesa Tobias. The trivia questions range from entertainment, sports, literature and music using sound byte software as clues. In the end, Chivas Regal was proclaimed the overall champion for creating "Trivia," an event that topped all other events.

LOUIE Ysmael, Reto Klauser, EJ Litton and Fritz Weber



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NU Skin holds anniversary seminar

NU Skin Phils. is commemorating its third anniversary this February. As part of the anniversary celebration, NSP will be holding a success seminar dubbed "Anniversary Highlight: Nu Skin@3: A Breakthrough," on Feb. 10, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Grand Ballroom of the New World Renaissance Hotel in Makati City. Call 689-0300.

GOINGS-ON

CONTEST. The search is on for Poet of the Year 2001. Deadline for submission of entries is on March 7. Entries must be original. Send your entries at Lupon sa Tula 2001, Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, G/F Watson Building, 1610 J.P. Laurel St., San Miguel, Manila. Call 736-2526 or 734-5547.

EXHIBIT. Philtrade Exhibits is hosting "Gifts and Giveaways Fair" at the Grand Boulevard Hotel, Roxas Boulevard, Manila from Feb. 10-11. The fair is open to the public. Call 820-7879/1570.

PROGRAM. The grand finals of the 15th Young Scientists and Sci-Artists Program is set on Feb.15, 4 p.m., at Philamlife Auditorium, UN Avenue, Manila. Call 525-8752, 536-3092 and 525-8418 (telefax).

GRAND REUNION. Class '51 of Araullo High School headed by its president, Felisa Gabriel Rodriguez, will celebrate its golden jubilee during the grand reunion of the Araullo High School Alumni Association Inc. on Feb. 17 at the School Library. Call Lourdes (825-9353), Yoli (939-2115), Ely (825-3983), Tess (843-2432), Paciencia (563-4179) and Carmen (561-0048).

SEMINAR. ProActive Center for Training will conduct a seminar/workshop on restaurant management on Feb. 5-13 at The Triple V Express, 2/L Bridgeway, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Call 823-4947.

EXHIBIT. The Seventh Edition National Furniture, Furnishing, Fashion Festival will be held from Feb. 9 to March 4 at the Centermall, Greenhills Shopping Center. Call 820-3862, 826-8162/-6732.

DR. Demetrio A. Quirino Jr., founder and chair of the Board of the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP), will celebrate his 76th birthday on Feb. 6 at its Quezon City campus. Dr. Quirino initiated a yearly blood donation in TIP for the past 33 years.

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GMA says she has no fashion sense—perfect!

She comes with the unique distinction of assuming the highest office with no 'alajera(s)' in tow. That should be good for the nation's coffers

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

ASKED in a TV interview last week what her fashion sense is, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said disinterestedly, "None." Perfect.

Just by saying nothing, she said a mouthful. To me, it meant she wouldn't be a Barbie Doll to be made over by every designer, fashionista and style tyrant in town.

More important, she's setting what we hope would be the lifestyle statement of her administration. Her governance should be not one of frills and form, but of substance and productivity. The state of the country, the mindset of the people—and the convictions declared by the young people in Edsa—will not allow anything less.

Even in the suspense and drama of Edsa 2 that Saturday of her inaugural, the celebrity-watcher in every Filipino didn't miss the detail that she wore a "drab" gray dress. It was as if even in the uncertainty of the moment, the Pinoy was looking for drop-dead packaging.

Arbitrary choice

Lest we thought that that gray dress was a hurried arbitrary choice of wardrobe, GMA, wittingly or not, rubbed in the message when on her first day at Malacañang that Monday, at the flag-raising ceremony before government employees, she was in a similarly nondescript dress, this time brown.

She repeated the message when she reviewed the troops a few days later—in outdated black and white pants ensemble you could get from any RTW rack. Clearly, they were no designer clothes. No designer has yet admitted to making them. Any *modista* could have made them. Perfect again.

And yet with clockwork predictability, lifestyle pages went into a frenzy of speculation as to what fashion style would suit the new President, from clothes to jewelry and hairdo—a ritual reserved for every First Lady and her coterie. (Hey, that's our job.) Well, it looks like there won't be much news in that area. (Where were we, by the way, when Gloria tried hard to brandish the **Nora Aunor** look before us? Guess we were all busy watching **Tita Ming**, then **Dra. Loi**.)

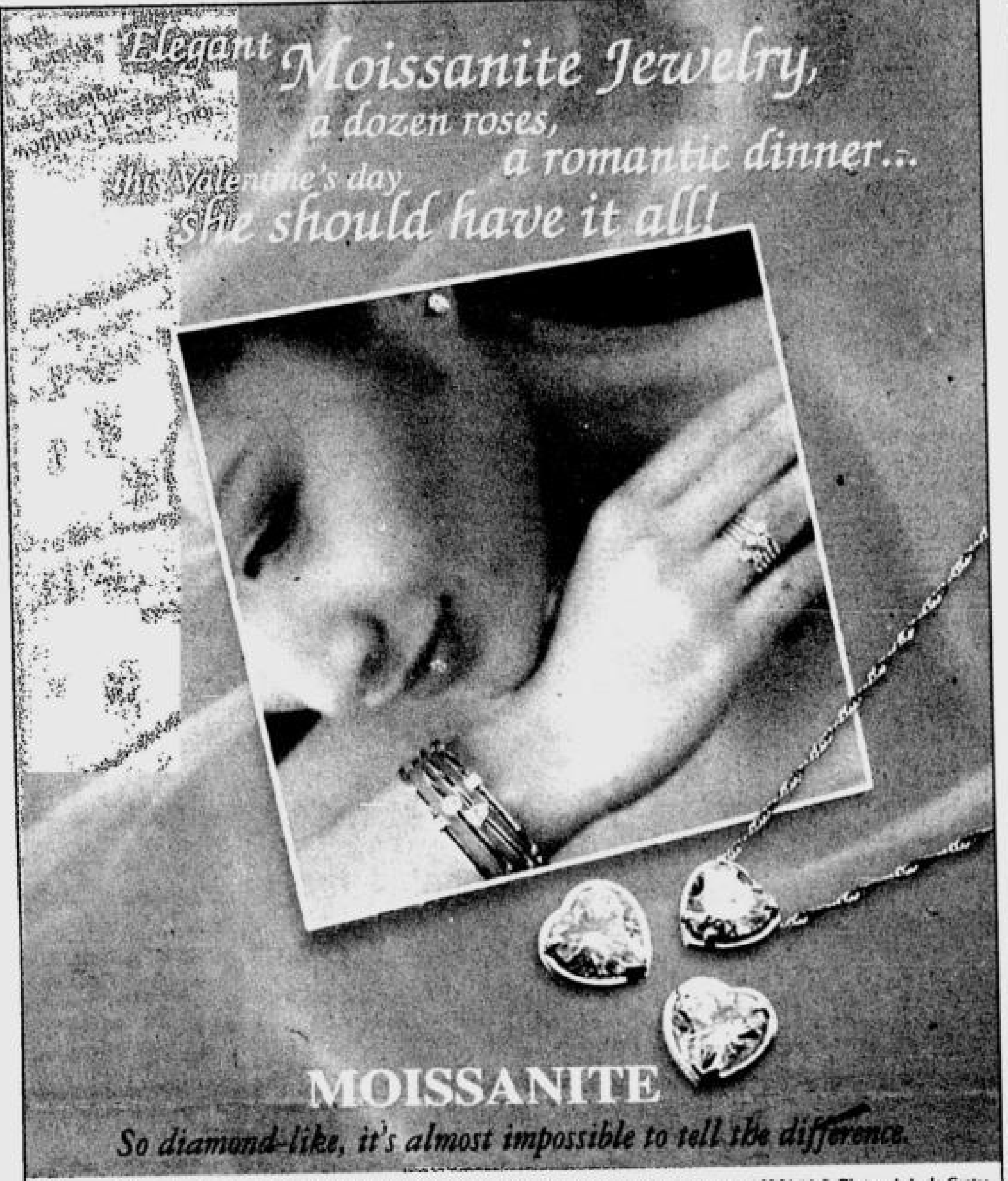
That GMA will not make exciting copy for the fashion coverage of Lifestyle sections is a good sign. She should be indicating that news should be pursued somewhere else, not in her clothes, and hopefully not in her jewelry (she wears inherited, not newly bought, jewelry).

Unique distinction

She comes with the unique distinction—for a government official – that she's assuming the highest office with no *"alajera(s)"* in tow. That should also hold true for pashminas. That's good for the nation's coffers. She should keep it that way. **Cory Aquino** had no *"alajera"* either but the air was thick with gossip as to where **Imelda Marcos'** abandoned jewelry (a portion of it, at least) went. Ming had none either, but *"kabuki"* had.

By now, GMA must know only too well that dissatisfac-

GMA/ p.E2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Heny Sison

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Feb. 7 (Wed.) 9:00-12:00 noon	BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison	P1,200
Feb. 7 (Wed.) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	DESSERT COFFEES by: Alleen Anastacio, Chef/Food Consultant, owner of Ces't Si Bon, graduate of culinary at the California Culinary Academy.	P1,200
Feb. 8 (Thurs.) 9:00-12:00 noon	FRENCH COOKING SERIES: LESSON II by: Jill Sandique, Chef/Food Consultant & Food Stylist, Blue Ribbon graduate of Peter Kump's New York Cooking School.	P1,500
Feb. 8 (Thurs.) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	TEA TIME! by: Alleen Anastacio	P1,200
Feb. 9 (Fri.) 9:30-4:00 p.m.	GIFTS FROM THE KITCHEN by: Jill Sandique	P1,200
Feb. 10 (Sat) 9:00-3:30 p.m.	NO-BAKE CHEESECAKES by: Heny Sison	P1,200
Feb. 12 (Mon.) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	DIMSUM by: Katherine C. Sion, restaurateur (Ding Hao Restaurant), caterer, an expert in Chinese Cuisine	P1,500
Feb. 13 (Tues.) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	EASTER TREATS by: Jill Sandique	P1,500
Feb. 14 (Wed.) 9:00-12:00 noon	MUFFINS & SCONES by: Heny Sison	P1,200
Feb. 14 (Wed.) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	BAKED PASTAS by: Alleen Anastacio	P1,500
Feb. 15 (Thurs.) 9:00-12:00 noon	HOW TO MAKE A PERFECT QUICHE by: Jill Sandique	P1,200
Feb. 15 (Thurs.) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	THE MANY WAYS TO COOK CHICKEN by Alleen Anastacio	P1,500
Feb. 16 (Fri.) 9:00-4:00 p.m.	BAKING II by: Heny Sison	P1,200
Feb. 17 (Sat.) 9:00-4:00 p.m.	FLORAL ARRANGEMENT AS GIFTS by: Glenn Remorca, floral designer.	P2,000
Feb. 19-23/26 March 2	MASTER IN CAKE DECORATION/BASIC by Heny Sison (Mon.-Fri.) 9:00-4:00 p.m.	P8,000
Feb. 24 (Sat.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.	MOMMY LILY'S SECRET RECIPES by: Lily Banzon	P1,500

Heny Sison at Julius Maggi Kitchen
Nestle Center #31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City

Feb. 13 (Tues.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.	PARADE OF PIES, TARTS & CHEESECAKES	P1,500
Feb. 17 (Sat.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.	CAKES WITH DISTINCTION	P1,500

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GMA says she has no fashion sense–perfect!

NO-NONSENSE style

CASUALLY clad for Lifestyle's Playtime

GOING preppy

MADRINA gown

(From page E1)

tion with government starts with the *"alajera(s)"* who feed the gossip mill that now will only be kept fueled by text-messaging. The people may not understand economics and budget deficits, but Filipinos know jewelry—real or moissanite. (**Loren,** are you listening?) And—this town can't—and won't—keep a secret.

Also, it seems GMA has no official designer. She has yet to call **Pitoy Moreno,** who has dressed her up since she was in her teens. Neither has she called **Auggie Cordero**, Cory's no-nonsense designer. It seems she hasn't tapped the services of any top designer. Talk has it that a friend connects her to a designer or a dressmaker whose budget doesn't exceed P2,500. By today's standards, perfect economics for an economist. (There's also talk that she might go to a very young designer, **JC Buendia.**)

She goes to Pitoy though for her "*ninang*" clothes at weddings, and even then she brings her own fabrics. Pitoy says GMA is no clotheshorse (but we don't need Pitoy to know that, right?), and is not interested in clothes nor jewelry. She must take after her mother **Eva**, the former First Lady who preferred the simple *kimona*, to the *terno*, for local functions.

Eva's time

She must also remember that her mother didn't particularly relish being gifted with *ternos* or gowns. The moment Eva became First Lady, Pitoy recalls, the first thing she instructed him was he was not to make any *terno* that would be given to the First Lady as gift. In time, Pitoy forgot this rule, acceded to the request of Eva's best friend to make a *terno* for the First Lady, which her best friend would give to Eva as a birthday gift. When Eva got the *terno*, she had it returned to Pitoy—with a stern reminder to the official designer.

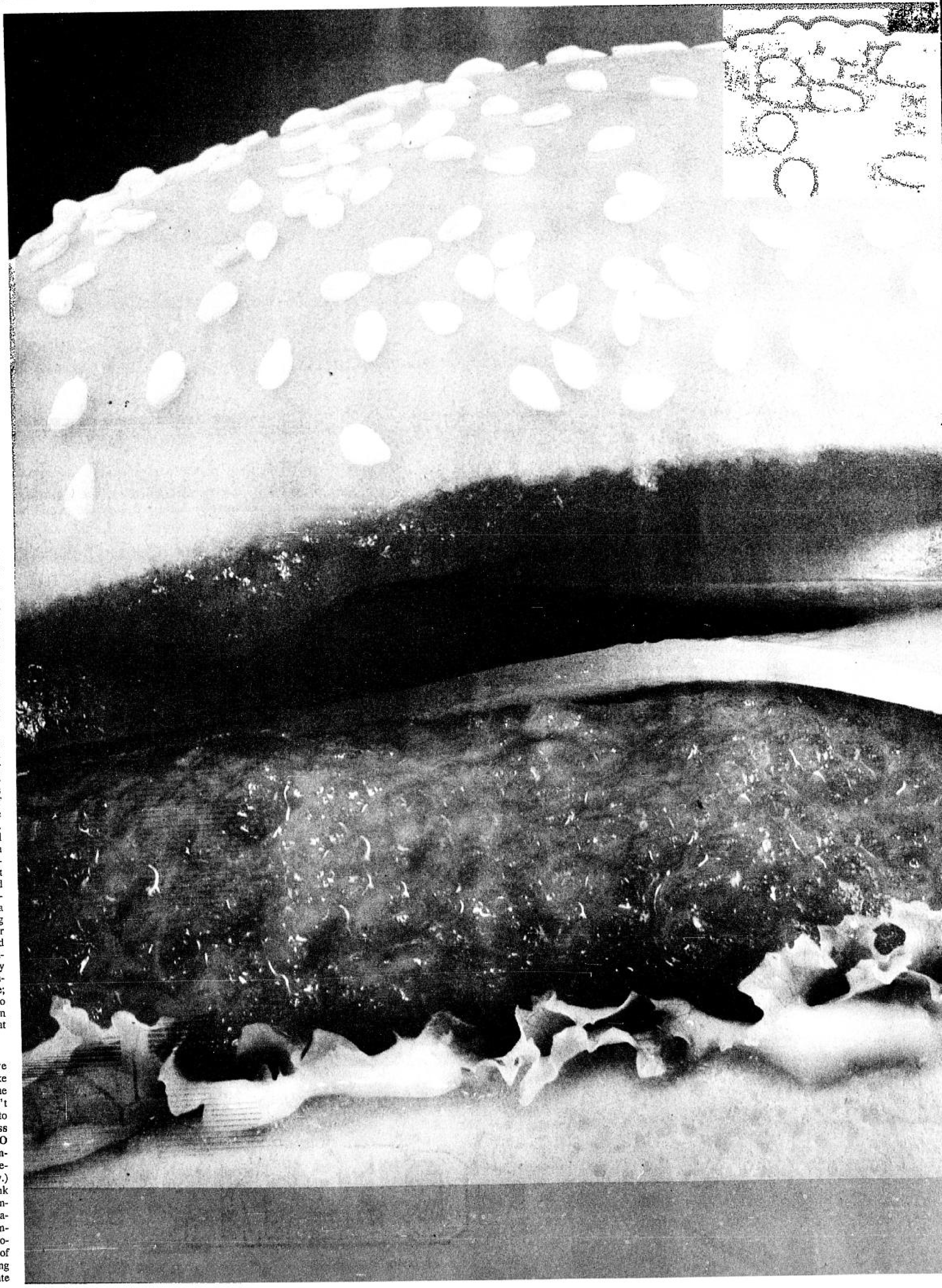
You can be sure Pitoy won't make that mistake now, not after he had been to Edsa 2 himself where he was struck by the sight of so many young people praying on their knees.

But Eva Macapagal was eons ago, when a mere statement of simplicity from a First Lady was a good enough gesture. Today, GMA is in for a much tougher sailing than her father ever was. GMA is tasked not only with straightening out the economy and the damaged tradition of governance; she's also expected to carry on the revolution for moral values that Edsa 2 started.

Mob rule

The times have changed and, we like to think, so have the Filipinos. We didn't mount Edsa 2 only to harvest a **Princess Diana** or a **Jackie O** or even a **Hillary Clinton** (who has been repackaged incessantly.)

We like to think Edsa 2 was not an empowerment of packaging; it was an empowerment of the people. It was the rebirth of civil society—a coming together of disparate



forces of society to produce a critical mass that took the nation's destiny in its own hand. Edsa will always have its use—it will stand for our 21st century unique institution—until the country's formal institutions assume the firmness and integrity of a democracy. This is why the Time essay of **Anthony Spaeth** on the "mob rule" is way off the mark, all *"pa-cute"* style at best but bereft of substance. Amazing how, with its resources, Time couldn't afford elementary research.

For decades now, we have been under celebritydom, and its obscenely expensive trappings. Imelda Marcos captured the pulse of her time when she said she dressed like a goddess, like a star, because the people hungered for a star. Ming Ramos broke away from all that when she dressed as herself—like a "cabbage patch," the other woman said—but the people respected her for that. Erap wore his stardom to the hilt.

Now, if the spirit of Edsa 2 is to be read correctly, we've had enough of pomp and glamour. Enough of hype and packaging. We want to get back to work, decent work, with decent values.

And we like to think that by wearing nondescript clothes, GMA is sending the message that she's out to bring back a lost work ethic. She should restore dignity and pride in government service, for there are still some decent career people left in government, those who miraculously survived the onslaught of crony appointments through the decades.

So how should GMA dress, what should her presidential fashion style be? She should dress up as herself, the President. Period. Softly tailored, power-look-tailored, earth tones or pastels—honestly, we couldn't care less. She should dress down for work—and wear that sense of pride in work for country, here and abroad.

The people should be watching not what she wears, but what she does. That should make Edsa 2 worth it.

She should watch—not her shifting shoulder pads, but her shifty Cabinet and generals.

An institution is gone

This week will be laid to rest **Josefina "Inang" Gonzales** of **R.T. Paras**, the fashion house that dressed generations of Filipinas, from **Meldy Cojuangco** to **Judy Roxas**. She died after surgery last Sunday morning. She was 88. Her only child **Roy** was a couturier of the House of Jean Patou, among others, in Paris. Our condolence to Roy.

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imee marcos
cablegal

Folio's at it again

FOLIO hits the newsstands nationwide with its latest issue themed "Techno Boon or Bane?"

Rep. Imee Marcos graces Folio's cover as she reveals her amusing techy side. Seven of the IT industry's experts answer a thumper of a question about technology's possible negative repercussions. A high-society guy tells why he's a techno cynic. Meet kids who have joined Bill Gates' school of techno wizardry. Hackers get dissed, while Guy Kawasaki reaps the kudos. One writer gets contemplative and probes deeper into this generation's techno-maniacal tendencies. Plus, a smorgasbord of juicy extras on food, fashion, music and people. In a nutshell, Folio's special IT issue.

Available at all National Bookstores and leading newsstands nationwide. Call Rossanna Pena at (632) 635-4638/5871.

Perennial fashion sale

THE "GREAT Italian Sale" is ongoing at LIG shops: Linea Italia 6750, Linea Italia (SM Manila, Ayala Center Cebu, SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center), Versace Jeans Couture (Greenbelt Mall), Prima Linea (Greenbelt, SM Megamall, Ayala Center Cebu), Viva (SM Megamall, SM Cebu), Linea Uomo (Alabang Town Center, Park Square 1, SM Cebu, SM Megamall); Uomo Tu (Greenbelt Mall, Ayala Center Cebu) Capolinea (Greenbelt, SM Cebu). Also participating are the Marconi Fashion Group chain (Morse corner Marconi Street, Makati City, Robinsons Galleria, SM North Edsa, Festival Supermall Alabang and Corso Marconi Cebu). Sale is on while supplies last.

ANGEL Aquino opts for VDP's midriff tops at Linea Italia.

What's in the stars?

THIS is a defining moment for the country. This is a period of transformation and the start of the healing of our soul.

Pluto, now squaring the country's Moon, means that people will realize the change in consciousness. Pluto is called the guardian of souls and its effect is lasting. However, Pluto is not an easy planet to bear. In fact, when Pluto acts, it will not ask for anything else, only the truth.

Whatever it takes to arrive at the truth, Filipinos will make it happen.

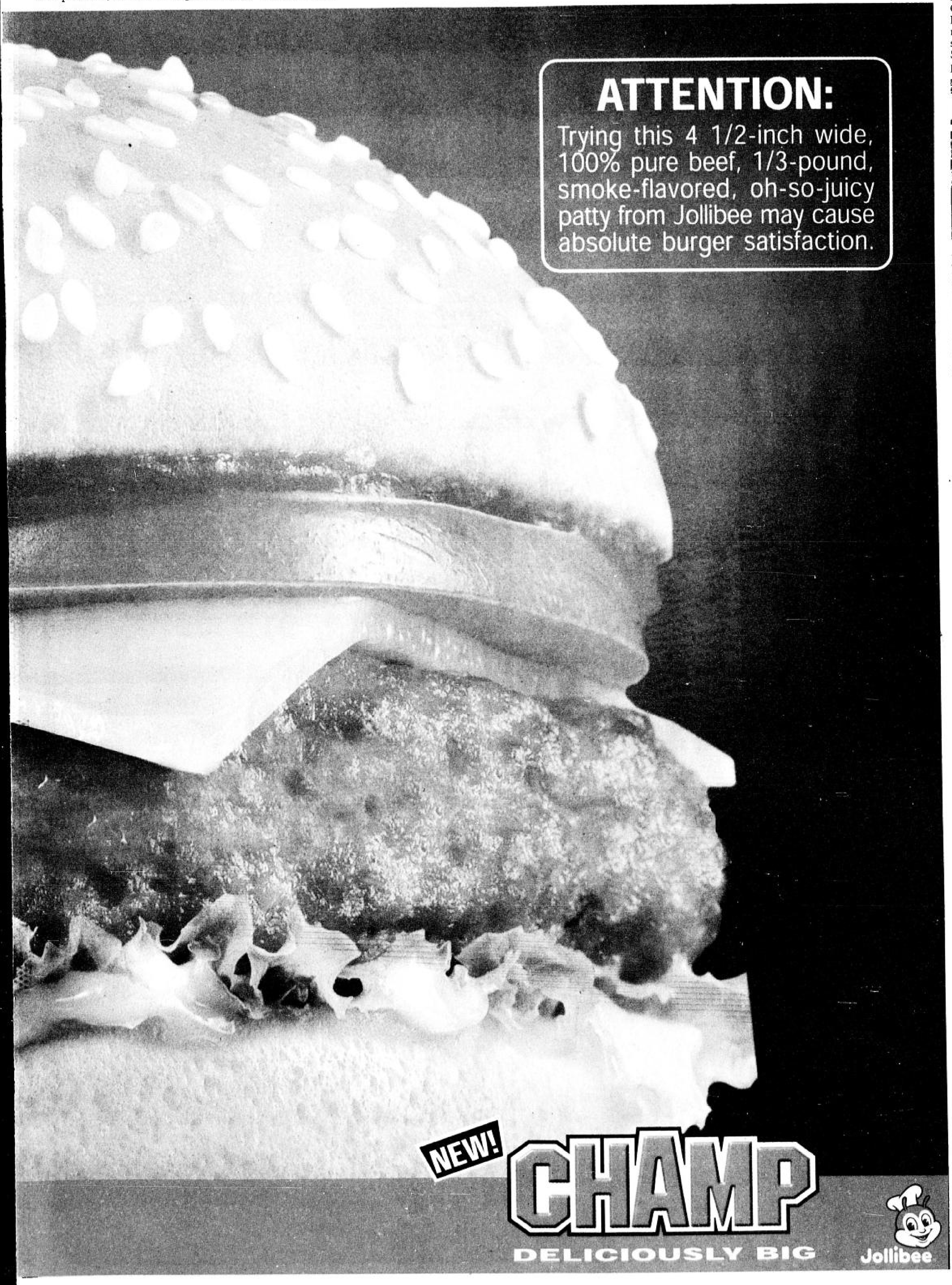
The people have been offended by the acts of those in power (as revealed by the square to the Moon) so they had demanded for true justice by rallying in the streets.

For the Filipinos, People Power was the only solution. The stars say that people in the streets would have increased in number and there'd be no turning back. We are now undergoing a progressed New Moon. This means that a new era is dawning on our land. Fortunately, this heavenly configuration occurs in the country's first house. This is an area of consciousness that comes after an area of unconsciousness. The Filipino people have awakened.

People Power was necessary because our future was at stake.

Based on Estrada's Arien personality, he would not step down and would do everything to remain in power. He has Moon in Leo, which says that pride and ego are too important to him. His Ascendant in Scorpio reveals that he would have held on to power. There would have been an attempt to impose martial rule in the country, via the emergency powers that could be invoked. Fortunately, we have hindered such plans.

For more information on what the stars say about the country, visit www.pinoyastrologer.com.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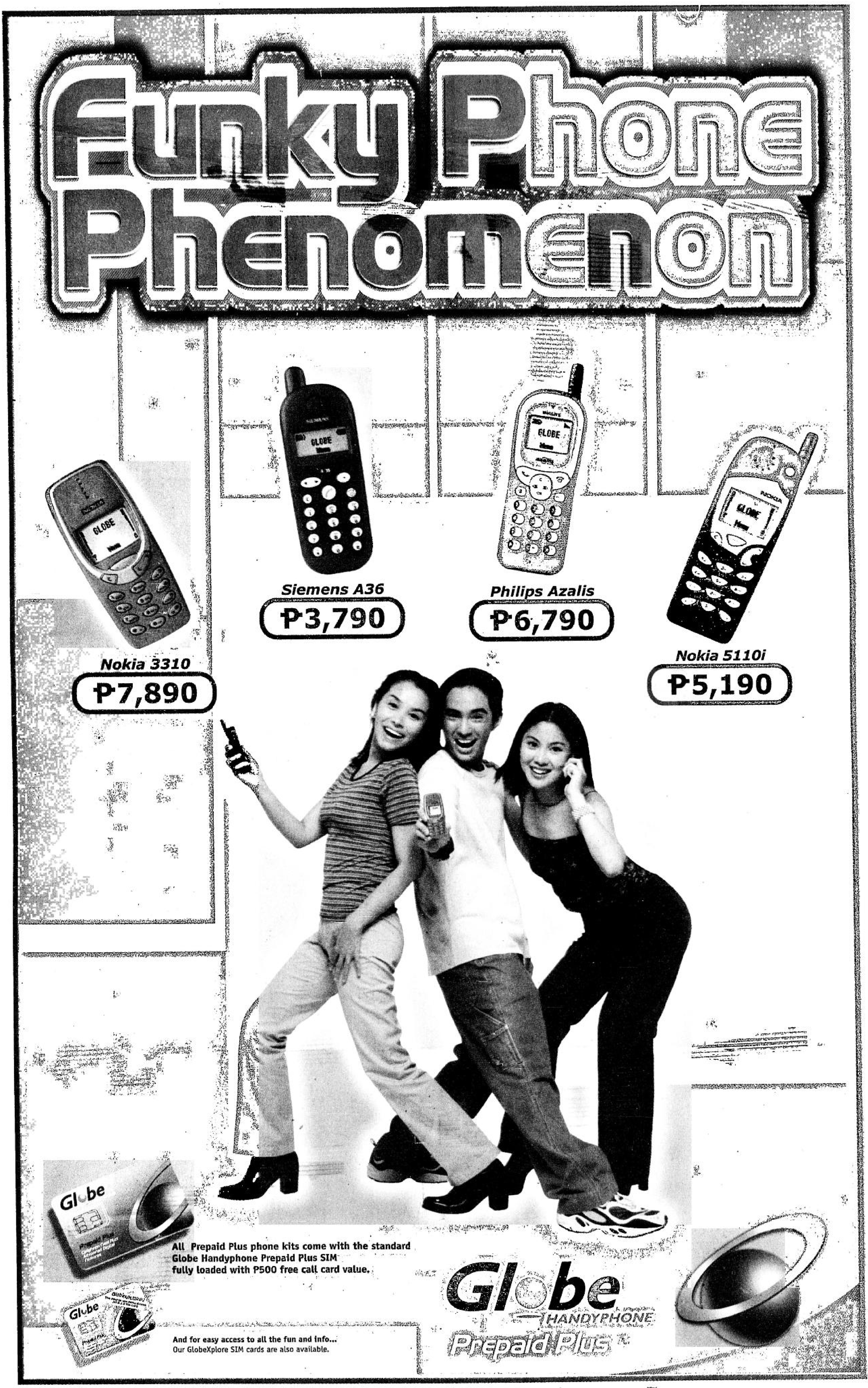

Funky Phone Phenomenon

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